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WIZARD

No. 8

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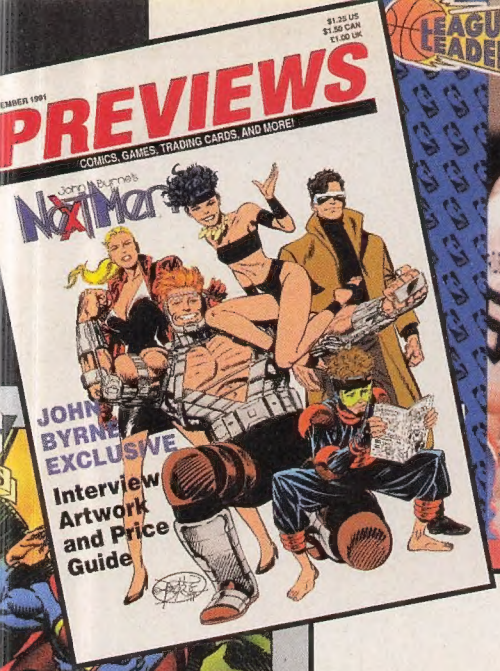

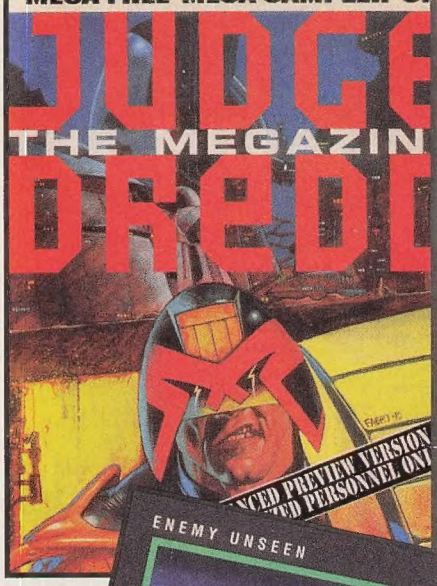

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WIZARD

Volume 1
Number 8
April 1992

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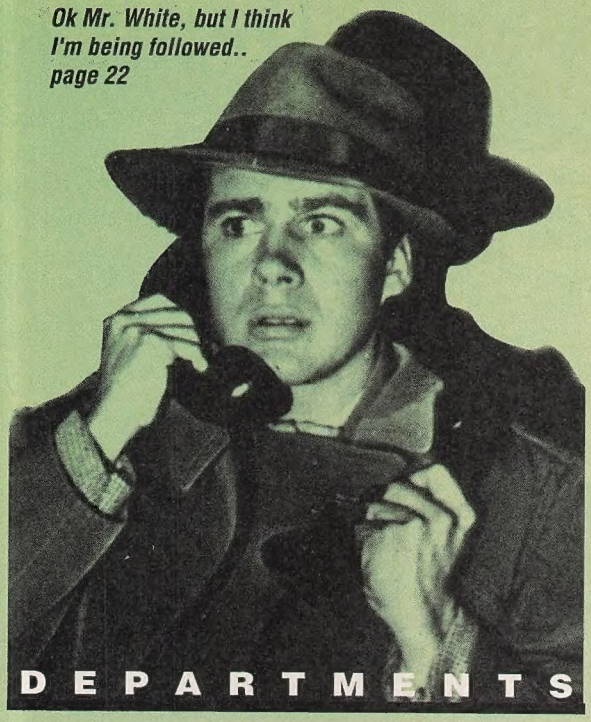

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LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

Hello and welcome to the eigth issue of Wizard: The Guide To Comics. You now hold in your hands the most exciting issue to date. Thanks to you, Wizard is now more popular than ever.

I've got a cool story behind this cover. Six months ago I contacted Whilce about doing a cover for us. I suggested an Archangel; but, Whilce suggested doing a brand new character named Bishop. Needless to say I don't think it wasn't such a bad idea.

I'm glad a bunch of you stopped by our booth in New York and San Diego. It's great to get out the office (not that I don't like the office) and meet with all of you.

While I was out in San Diego I paid a visit to Homage Studios to do the interview with Whilce. I think it went really well. I got a chance to hang out in the studio and take lots of pictures that I'm sure you're going to enjoy. If you could ask me one question right now, I'm sure the answer would be, "yes, Jim Lee will be doing a Wizard cover to knock the socks right off your feet!" I will not say anymore until, well... let's play it by ear, you will be properly warned.

I wish to clear up a few questions that quite a few of you had been asking regarding our newsstand distribution, issues #8 on will have the same cover as the direct market. Due to popular demand we have also showed you a sampling of the Venom cover for #9, so make sure you reserve your copies now.

Okay, okay, okay, I can't wait to tell you any longer... Issue #10 will feature one awesome ROB LIEFELD cover. Not only that but every issue will contain the Youngblood trading card #0, only available in Wizard, and if that's not enough, were going to make this a spectacular 200+ page issue (same cover price) with so much unbelieveable stuff you're going to go absolutely crazy. OH, I can't wait.

With all this great stuff in mind, enjoy reading your newest issue. Let me know what you think, I still love getting mail.

Stay cool,

Gareb S. Shamus
"The Big Cheese"

WIZARD

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A Letter From Our Editor

Preaching To The Choir?

Hypothetical situation: You're the promotions and/or marketing head for one of the top comic publishers—Marvel, DC, Valiant, Dark Horse, it doesn't matter. Your editorial department has just handed you the information on a terrific new project...one that doesn't involve superheroes, flashy costumes, the latest "hot"artist or any of the other things that usually mean automatic success in comic-book publishing today.

What it does have is strong storylines, mature themes (not sex, just ideas that may be a touch above the head of your average 13-year-old), clean, readable art, and a concept that—if used in a mainstream novel, for example—would be a best-seller.

Where do you advertise this paragon of artistic virtue? What audience do you try to reach in publicizing and marketing it?

If you're like the promotions/marketing people at the major publishers, you put ads in *Comic Buyer's Guide, Amazing Heroes, Comic Shop News* and, yes, *WIZARD*. And those are the only places you will advertise. This is called "preaching to the choir". The people who read this and other magazines about comics already know about comics, already have a pretty good idea of the range of material that can be found in the graphic story form.

And they are, unfortunately, probably not the people who will most appreciate the title in question, because it has none of the things they have demonstrated they want in a comic in the past.

So the question is—where should such a title be advertised? How about *The Village Voice* or any other such "alternative" newspaper in any other city? How about the *New York Times Book Review*? or the book section of any other major newspaper.

Solid example: Has anyone seen an ad for DC's *Sandman* in any of those places—or in science-fiction and fantasy journals like *SF Chronicle* or *Locus*—in the days since it garnered two World Fantasy Awards, for Best Short Story and Best Artist? I'll bet you haven't—yet the opportunity for expanding *Sandman*'s audience seems obvious, doesn't it?

Many fans and professionals—including those marketing and and promotion heads—have been bemoaning the lack of variety in comics for year...yet every time there's an oddball, non-constumed adventure title available, they treat it like the ugly cousin of the superhero line. "Shove it in the corner, in the dark over there. We don't know what to do with it, we don't want to be bothered with it. Maybe it'll just die all by itself if we leave it alone".

The choir already believes, folks. It's got religion. Let's try to reach all those "heathens" outside the comics shops for a change.

-Patrick Daniel O'Neill

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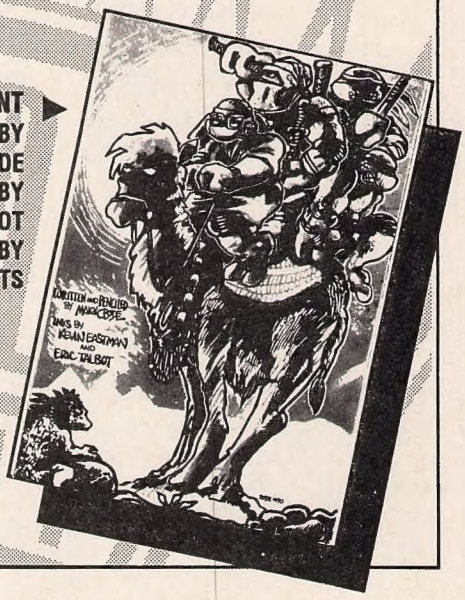

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PORT

In late January the Wizard went on the Mighty Mutant Tour in sunny San Diego, **Wizard** California. We caught up **Interviews** with super-talent **Whilce Portacio**, in the middle of *Uncanny Deadlines* to ask him a few questions. Right now we're sitting in the new *Homage Studios;* Whilce has a great window seat overlooking miles of Southern California, turn around and Scott Williams is finishing up some *Uncanny X-Men* pages that are due out in a few weeks. If you do a complete 180 degrees you can see Jim Lee in office/studio fumbling for the latest copy of WIZARD to find out how he's doing in the charts.

ACIO

WIZARD: So Whilce, what do you notice about the comic market as opposed to years ago?

PORTACIO: Something that we have been noticing is that comics have started shifting to a creator-run market so to speak, where somebody will become popular and an issue that he did five years ago will suddenly be sold out. Before the market used to be almost solely run by characters - no matter who went on the *X-Men* the book stayed number 1 - but slowly you see that when Todd McFarlane gets on a book and if that character is real popular, then everybody wants to do it. Jim Lee, Rob Liefeld, anybody who is in the top ten — they get on a book and do the character for a little while then it's a million seller. That's actually a surprise - a million mark. It used to be 600,000; now it's a million. It'll go up to two million and then the mark is four million. Now it's eight million and in six more months you don't know where we're gonna be. I don't know what it is about the industry but more than a few of us are accused of being younger than we are. I know, for instance, Mike Baron - when I first met him I could have sworn he was 17 years old and he's a bit older than I am. He's actually gonna be — he's older than I am.

WIZARD: Has age ever been a deterrent?

PORTACIO: No, fortunately it never has. This is an industry that not many people can get into, because you not only have to do what the fans want—because it is a commercial market—but you also have to be able to do what they want with everything coming out of your head. We can't hire models 24 hours a day and if we did, it would take a long time. So not that many people can actually do what we do.

WIZARD: How did you break into the comic book business?

PORTACIO: Pretty much just like everybody else. I got a portfolio together - samples of story telling, samples of superheroes, samples of normal people, samples of normal buildings, fantastic buildings, fantastic ships, and brought it to a convention and showed it to an editor. Editors are the only people who can actually give you a job, and I got a job.

WIZARD: Which convention was it? Do you remember?

PORTACIO: It was 1983 San Diego Con and everybody kept pretending they were (Marvel editor), Carl Potts and finally I met Carl Potts and he hired me.

WIZARD: Right on the spot?

PORTACIO: Yes.

WIZARD: Who were the most helpful people on your way up?

PORTACIO: Early on I met Brent Anderson. He actually did the *X-Men* graphic novel and he was very helpful with tips about the industry. I knew very little about the industry itself. As an example, I started out as an inker and one of the things that everybody else knows is after you finish inking a job, you have to erase the pencil. I didn't know that. So I sent in my first job with direct pen-

cil still on it. They sent it back, and I erased it. So Brent Anderson was key in walking me through all the various steps.

WIZARD: Did you have any formal training?

PORTACIO: I actually had a great high school art teacher. I was with him for two years and he taught me pretty much the basics of everything I know right now. I did go to college for two years majoring in fine arts, but to make a long story short, I flunked out in my second year. But three months later, I landed this job. So it did work out.

WIZARD: Why did you choose comics? Why not a job in in advertising?

PORTACIO: Actually, believe it or not, I was 21 and I needed to do something with my life. I wanted to do something in art, but I really didn't know where I was going or what I was going to do. A cousin told me that three months from now there was going to be a comic book convention and they're looking for people, so why don't you bring some stuff over? So I brought it over and this is where I am right now.

WIZARD: When you were working on the *Punisher*, did you ever help out on the plotting?

PORTACIO: No. Mike Baron is very good at keeping his deadlines so he was always way ahead of me. I got into the industry and I started out as an inker, even though my pencils were not too far from where they are now. The only problem was I couldn't tell a story. In the time that I worked as an inker, I studied story telling and cinematography and learned how to tell a story. Then I was able to land the *Punisher* job. When I got the *Punisher* job, I was pretty much honing my story telling craft, so I concentrated just on telling the story that was given to me. Even if Mike did ask for any suggestions or anything, I pretty much wouldn't have anything up my sleeve.

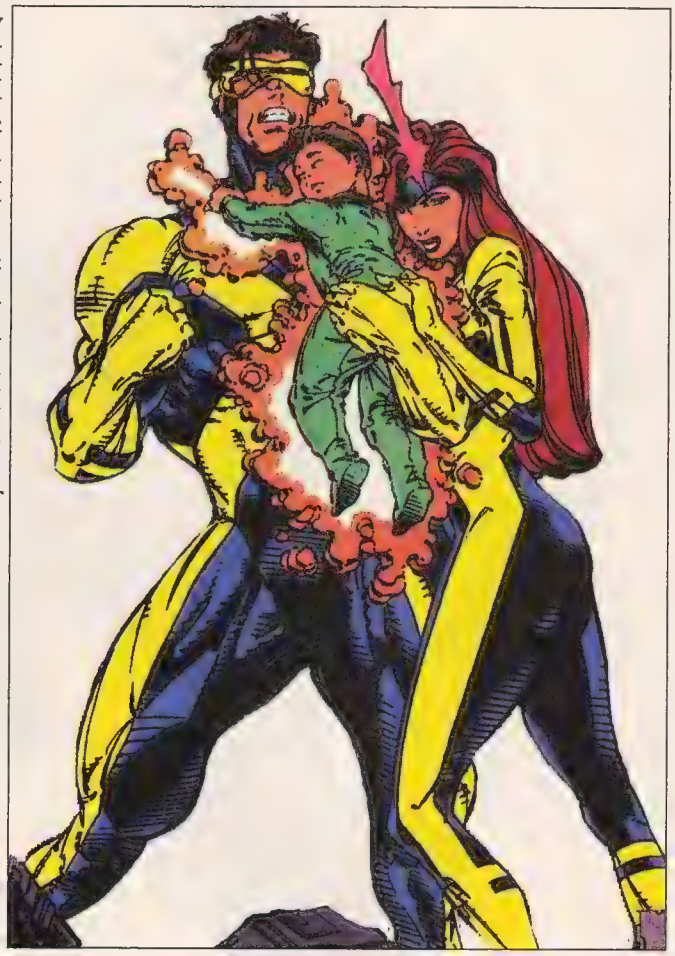
WIZARD: Were you more comfortable working on a single character book like *Punisher*, or team books like *X-Factor* or *X-Men*?

PORTACIO: It was my first book, so it was best that I worked on a single character. The deadline crunch gets to everybody, and when you start on a group book drawing six to seven people every month can be a grind to anybody starting out. I can't really say I prefer one or the other, though doing a single character would be much easier. (Slight pause while Jim makes lots of noise shooting rubber band projectiles at everyone in the studio, with his new Texas 12 shooter.) But for me right now it depends on the writing. If I like the stories, if I like the characters, I'll

deal with it pretty much however the book stands.

WIZARD: Prior to working on *Uncanny X-Men*, were you a fan of the book?

PORTACIO: Yes, actually a little story got around that I was actually called up a week before Jim to do a little fill-ins on *X-Men*. I turned it down, because at the time the X-men were made up of Storm and Wolverine and Colossus, and I didn't know those people. I grew up on the X-Men of the 60's - the original team. So when the *Uncanny* job was offered to me which was at the time of *X-Factor*, I jumped on that because it was brand new and fortunately the book I'm working on now, *Uncanny*, is comprised of most of that original team.



WIZARD: Was this an assignment you went after, or did it "fall into your lap"?

PORTACIO: It pretty much fell into my lap. Jim Lee vacated the book and they offered me the book.

WIZARD: How did you get along with Jim?

PORTACIO: Oh, he's a pain.... Actually it's interesting about our "relationship". We're both not very competitive artists, but if he does a particularly good drawing on any particular day, I might grind down and try to outdo him.

WIZARD: That's my next question. Do you guys strive to outdo each other every month, or is it kind of "do your own thing, don't worry about the other guy"?

PORTACIO: Actually, for the most part we are on alternate schedules. When I'm drawing, he's writing up a plot or finishing up some other stuff, and when he's drawing, I'm doing something else. There are times when we are doing stuff at the same time and if he'll do something particularly great, he might hold it up, and if I do something particularly great, I'll hold it up and we'll both be trying harder. I have to add that it's a healthy competition. I would like to say that there is very little envy in the whole thing—it's just keeping each other on their toes, because there is a tendency after you have gained any kind of success in any field to start believing the press and start slowing down. If we both keep egging each other on to do better - occasionally it will even be to the point of trying out different styles on scratch paper because something inspired us—and the other guy will be challenged to try to outdo that style, so that it's healthy in the respect that because of it we keep growing.

WIZARD: How do you get along with the rest of Homage Studios.

PORTACIO: I think that's one of the things about the studio - it's kind of like a little family and nobody's in the Studio just because. We are all friends and we do get along well together. Homage Studios will grow, but it will grow slowly, it will be a select bunch.

JIM LEE: Hey Whilce, you need help with that cover. I think I can help you out. (Whilce and I laugh.)

WIZARD: How did Homage Studios get its start?

PORTACIO: We all started getting bored drawing by ourselves at home. You wake up and you walk three feet to your drawing table and you draw, and your bed is right next to you, so any time you get tired you lay down in your bed, or there's the TV or the phone or the computer or something else. We met early on and decided, "Hey, let's get a place"! Scott and I already had our houses over here, so we kind of outvoted Jim to set up Homage Studios here in San Diego. But as it turned out, it's all for the best.

WIZARD: What artists do you admire?

PORTACIO: I still admire the people that got me juiced up. Three artists from the 1960s. Neil Adams for his realness and his realistic ap-proach to lighting; Jack Kirby for his fantastic creativeness—he has the most creative mind I have ever seen and his drawings are explosive; and Gil Kane—his structure, his validity of drawing of anatomy. Those three people inspired me to come up with the style that I have, if you can call it a style yet. I do like a lot of people today like Mignola, Sienkiewicz, Golden, but those three are still paramount in my mind.

WIZARD: What is your single most favorite piece of art you've done?

PORTACIO: Actually, my favorite right now is still *Punisher* #10. It's *Punisher* #10, because we're all doing fantasy type books and my philosophy is since we're doing fantastical people in fantastical situations, even Punisher, if you add realism to that then the people get all the more fantastic, because you're grounding them in reality. Then you can fudge that line where people can start thinking, "Hey, maybe this could happen". So that issue where we had Punisher go up against superhero Daredevil and I tried to ground out as much reality as I could and so far from what I've done, that issue has accomplished it the best.

WIZARD: What about other artists? What's your favorite piece ever?

PORTACIO: Ever? I still look at and admire, and say, "Gosh darn, how'd he do that"? Just about anything that Barry Windsor-Smith has done. He and Moebius. Especially Windsor-Smith. He can do stuff where anatomy seems a little weird but it just looks so damn good. He is an "artist" in my mind.

WIZARD: Most people know you for your art. When did you first start co-plotting?

PORTACIO: I actually began co-plotting with my first issue of *X-Factor* #63. They kind of enticed me to get on the book because they heard from Jim that I am a fan of anything Japanese and Bob Harras, the editor, called up Louise Simonson, the writer at the time, and said, "Do a Japanese story". She called me up and asked what stuff I was interested in and we talked and I started co-plotting. Ever since then I've been co-plotting *X-Factor* and *Uncanny*.

WIZARD: When plotting out your stories, do you give yourself a pretty detailed script, or do you leave it kind of loose, and see where your art takes you?

PORTACIO: I prefer detailed plots, not to the point of having all the dialogue in there detailed, but in the sense that all the action is explicit. I like detailed plots because one of my other goals is to be a film director.

WIZARD: Everybody wants to be a movie star.

PORTACIO: I love the idea of taking a beautiful screenplay and bringing it to life. I like the idea of bringing life to something two dimensional - something flat.

WIZARD: Where do you go from here? Do you plan on doing full writing in the near future?

PORTACIO: I'm having a lot of fun writing. Mostly in the sense, that I'm enjoying getting to know the characters and so I have a vested interest in seeing where the characters go, because I think I know who the characters are now and where they should be going, I'm like a friend of theirs and I want to make sure everything is done right. My first love is still drawing and trying to bring life to the words, so I will work with any writer. If I get a story that's great, regardless of whether it's written by someone in the studio or somebody outside of the studio, I would do it. I took up writing because we needed a plot. We wrote something up in the studio and they accepted it. I don't really have any goals writing-wise, because I admire everybody else's craft in writing and I know a lot of them waiting to become writers. I think I have what it takes to become a great writer. I enjoy what I'm doing right now, but in the near future I'd just like to draw nice great stories.

WIZARD: Any characters you want to work on?

PORTACIO: I'm a person of extremes and balances, if that means anything. My favorite characters have always been Deathlok and Silver Surfer, two extremes. Surfer extremely good, Deathlok extremely bad, but both of them have that one fine point in common which is they are both human, or in Surfer's case humanoid. They are both in drastic situations where everything is stripped from them,

but they still survived and they survived as themselves. They don't give up anything of themselves. Deathlok was dismantled, destroyed, his mind switched, everything—he stayed himself. The same with Surfer, everything was taken away from him. He stayed true to himself. To me that is an honorable goal.

WIZARD: Who is your favorite X-Man? Do you have any big plans for him?

PORTACIO: The official answer is Bishop, because he's a glimpse of the direction I want the book to go in to. But the real answer is Opal. Opal is Bobby's Japanese girlfriend. I think Japanese women are gorgeous.

WIZARD: In *Uncanny X-Men* #281, you killed off a ton of major characters. Are they staying dead, or is it another "Marvel Death" scenario?

PORTACIO: This is Marvel Comics, right? I'll be real official here, and all I can say on that point is that I was given a list of things to do and I did them.

WIZARD: Speaking of dead people, are you and Jim keeping Magneto dead, or can we expect to see him again soon?

PORTACIO: As I understand it, he has been put on the shelf to let other people grow, but just put on the shelf.

WIZARD: Since you've started with the *X-Men*, it's been nothing but "major happenings" storylines. Any more big shakeups planned for '92?

PORTACIO: Nothing really. For the time being we want to concentrate on not being accused of the dreaded dangling plotlines. We started a couple of plotlines so for the next four to six months, we'll be tying up and answering all the questions that everybody wants answered. After that we'll start shaking people up again. Like maybe everybody will go through the Seige Perilous and come out Japanese.

WIZARD: You had something to do with both *Uncanny X-Men* #201 and *X-Factor* #68, both dealing with Cyclop's child Nathan Summers. What do you know of the rumor concerning his being Cable?

PORTACIO: It's weird, because I just inked *Uncanny X-Men* #201. I was a hired hand on that, and I was actually a guest inker. It just turns out that Nathan was born that issue, *X-Factor* #68. I had no idea who he was. People seem to have gotten the impression that this was a pet story I've had for eons, but it's just one of those weird coincidences in life. Like I told you, I get a list of things to do. One of the things on the list of *X-Factor* that I had to do was to somehow put Nathan on the shelf, and that is the story we came up with there. About him being Cable? Hmmmmm. I think that was one of the ideas. I have no idea of the official way it goes, because Cable is not a character that I can play around with. At the time, it seemed like that is what was supposed to happen. But again, we're in the Marvel Universe. We're all given lists of things to do, so when I get the order to have Nathan stand up and say "I am Nathan", then I'll do it, and if I don't ever get the order then maybe it will never be done.

WIZARD: What are your plans with Image Press? There's Rob Liefeld's *Youngblood*; Todd McFarlane's *Spawn*; Jim Lee's *Wild Cats*. What about you?

PORTACIO: Well, I've been offered a position in the company, to join that line up. I haven't made a decision up until this point. The only thing I can say is, it seems the top 10 is shifting towards that direction, I might have to follow. It does entice me to create and own my own characters, however, I've been so busy on *Punisher, X-Factor*, and *Uncanny*, I really don't know what I want to do.

WIZARD: Do you have a book, a name, a team you have in mind?

PORTACIO: I've always wanted to do a Conan type story, the idea of man struggling to survive. The universe they're talking about is a superhero universe. I will have to think that out.

WIZARD: No characters with special powers yet?

PORTACIO: No, if you do see it, tell yourself it's something that I thought about.

WIZARD: Before we go, what do you want your fans to know about Whilce Portacio?

PORTACIO: I want everybody to know that I am not Whilce Portacio. There's never ever been a person by that name and there never ever will be.

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The none-too-bright future first shown in the pages of Uncanny X-Men #141 & 142 has once again touched the lives of our merry mutants. In a recent battle with the evil Trevor Fitzroy, the X-Men first came into contact with the lethal mutant Bishop, a mutant with the power to absorb and re-use other people's mutant powers. As it turns out, Fitzroy had been using his mutant ability to create time portals to bring in an army of mutants from the future, which he used to battle the X-Men. Then, just as things were going smoothly, boom! Bishop and two companions (Malcom and Randall) show up to attack and kill Fitzroy's legion. Then, as Bishop confronts Fitzroy, he learns the terrible truth - the portals are one way only. He, Malcom, and Randall are here, and here to stay. After a heated argument with Storm, she and Bishop part ways. Storm returned to the X-Mansion and Bishop went to hunt down the last of the escaped future mutants and exterminate them before they can kill any more innocent people. So now, alone with his two comrades and with no way back home, the future looks uncertain for this dynamic new hero.

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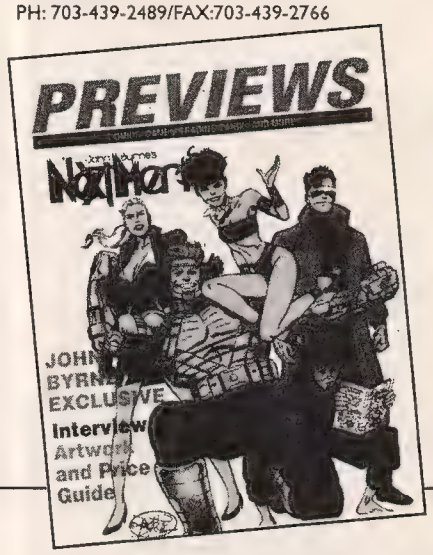

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Canary in the

A talk with Sarah Byam...by Andrew S. Harris

Sarah Byam was in Washington, DC, purely by coincidence, during the Clarence Thomas congressional hearings. Normally a resident of the other Washington—the one up in the top-left corner of the map—and a writer for the other DC—the comic book company—Byam found herself out of her environment but not necessarily out of her element. As perhaps the most overtly feminist writer in mainstream comics today, Byam has some strong ideas about women's roles both in and out of comics, an as the writer for the new Black Canary series, she will have the forum to express them. "I'm going to make a political statement", Byam points out, after her return from the East Coast, where she received approval from DC for the first year's worth of storylines for the new series. "It's gotten me in trouble before and it'll get me in trouble again, but it's important to have Dinah believe in something".

In fact, her take on Black Canary has already been well received. Byam's work on the recent Black Canary "New Wings" mini-series was strong enough to warrant sales that gained approval for an ongoing series, despite a usually high cover price and direct-sales-only marketing. And, as a perennial supporting cast member in books like Green Acres and the original Justice League of America, it is the first time DC has given a writer the opportunity to show that this bird knows how to fly on her own.

Byam has some strong ideas about women's roles, both in and out of comics...

Catbird Seat

"Black Canary has been a long time in the works. I worked as Mike Grell's assistant for Green Arrow for a while and I was really interested in Black Canary. She's been around a long time and there hasn't been a lot of character development in her own right", Byam says. "Most of the time it manifested itself by having her tell the boys she could take care of herself, rather than doing something in her own right".

Indeed, that has been perhaps the most consistent observation about Black Canary—that as one of the few longstanding female heroes in the DC universe, she seemed mishandled by the men writing the stories, who used her either as a pretty bystander or a staple victim.

But, says Byam, "I wouldn't call it 'mishandled' as much as 'underutilized", and I'm not saying that to be politic. Male writers are sometimes in a position where they have a female character and they wouldn't necessarily know how a female would act and react in a certain situation. One of the things I wanted to work on was overcoming this 'woman as victim' type of story. No offense to Mr. Grell, because he does a good job of creating a character that's flawed, and that's interesting. But Dinah all the way through has had this feminine characteristic of enduring, and that's what I want to bring out. I'm not saying you have to be black to write a believable black character or a woman to write a believable female character...but it sure helps".

Some would also say that Black Canary's costume—a combination of leather and fishnet stockings, along with a blond wig—could never be tolerated by a female writer, let alone a female character. But Byam sees Dinah's use of the costume as a deliberately feminist act, one in which she uses her own sexuality to establish authority, rather than when the exploitation is performed by males.

"This is going to be anti-feminist party line", she begins. "The difference with what I want to do with Dinah—and I want to change her costume gradually, but not radically, over the year—is what I see as the difference between Marilyn Monroe and Madonna. Female sexuality is something that can be an extremely powerful thing, and there's something empowering about taking the thing that was used to exploit woman and turning it into something that grants you power yourself. So Black Canary uses her costume at this point for two reasons—first, out of respect for her mother (the original, Golden-Age Black Canary), and second, because she takes advantage of the way that people underestimate her because of the way she looks".

Byam's feminist outlook is even more apparent in her

Dark Horse series Billi 99. Sales have been more than pleasing, Byam says—but she's still afraid that not enough people have been reading it.

"A lot of retailers only ordered two, three, or four copies, all of which have been selling out", she notes. "In Washington, DC, two or three days after it came out, it had sold out. I expected it to sell out in Seattle, but when Dick Giordano (of DC Comics) was pissed off because he couldn't get a copy in New York and I couldn't find a copy anywhere to give to him, I was both happy and disappointed at the

same time. It's a real difficult thing to convince retailers, to make the investment in a black-and-white property that isn't attached to something, that isn't a licensed property Predator or Aliens. Let's be honest, I'm not Frank Miller. I'm not going to be picked up because my name is recognized".

Byam may feel that way now, but her name may become higher-profile as the months pass. She's already signed on to do the Green Arrow annual this coming summer, an assignment which seems natural given Green Arrow's relationship with her main character.

"Green Arrow continuity is a little different from the rest

of the DC universe, and the Black Canary series is kind of a bridge between the two", Byam says. "It's going to be interesting to see how the two characters develop, how the relationship develops, and what people think of it".

And, if the current sales are any indication, there's going to be a lot of people watching.

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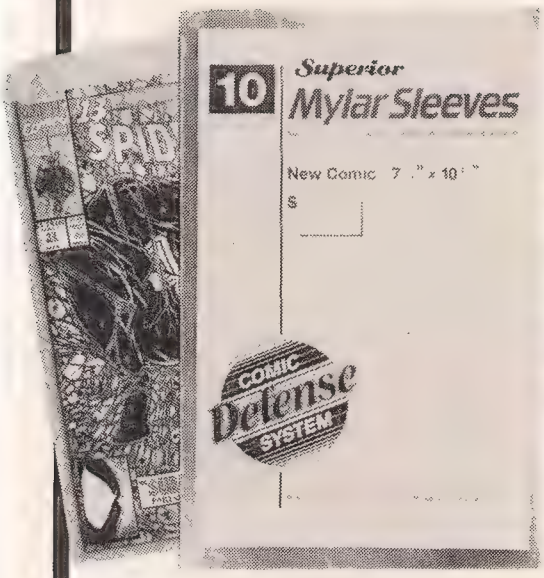

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Superman's Pal, Jack Larson?

A talk with the man who brought the Man of Steel's youthful buddy to life for a generation (or more) of fans.

By Vinnie Bartilucci

There's not a comic fan alive today who didn't grow up watching *The Adventures of Superman* on some channel or another in their home town. Twenty-five years and climbing since its premiere, the show is still on, and Nickelodeon has put it back in a national spot, on *Nick at Nite*. And of its stars, few were more beloved than Jack Larson, who played Jimmy Olsen. In a recent conversation, Larson recalled a few things about the show, and shared them with WIZARD.

Curiously enough, Larson didn't go after the part of Jimmy Olsen, he was approached by the producers. "I'd been a kid under contract at Warner Brothers, and they came to me about Superman", he recalls. "Now up until this time, they had only done live television, and this would have been one of the first filmed shows. So National Comics (*National Periodical Publications*, now *DC*) was producing the show, and they wanted me. Now my real interest was to get to New York to be in the theater—I was blinded by the glamour of the theater. But my agent came to me and said 'look, kid, this is like making a Saturday afternoon serial—we don't even know if anyone is going to ever see it. It's not going to change anything in the movies or in the theater for you, so if you want to get to New York, do this. It's 20 weeks' work, just take the money and run'. I have never had a less true prophecy said to me in my life! It went on the air in

1953, and I became Jimmy Olsen forever".

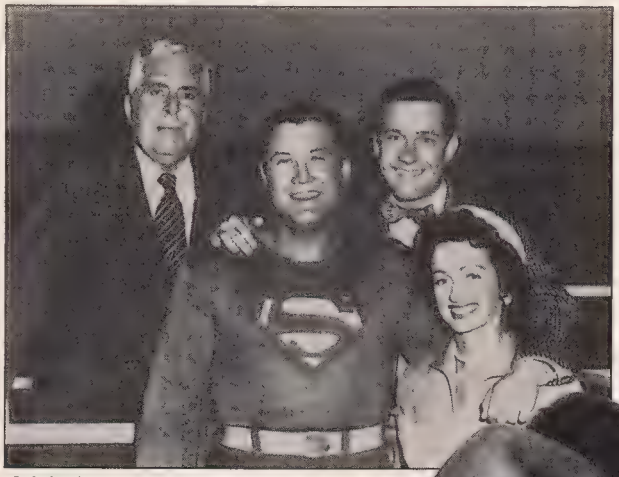
For a person of Larson's age, it was quite a challenge to get used to his overnight celebrity. "I had done all the live television you could think of, but suddenly I was no longer just an actor, I was Jimmy Olsen".

"The first real experience I had with my popularity was in a little diner near 82nd and Madison", he remembers. "I was having a late breakfast, and suddenly kids from a nearby school were packed against the plate glass window, standing on each other's shoulders looking in at someone. I had no idea it was me! Suddenly there were hundreds and hundreds of kids there, and the police had to get me out! That was when I realized were were on to something".

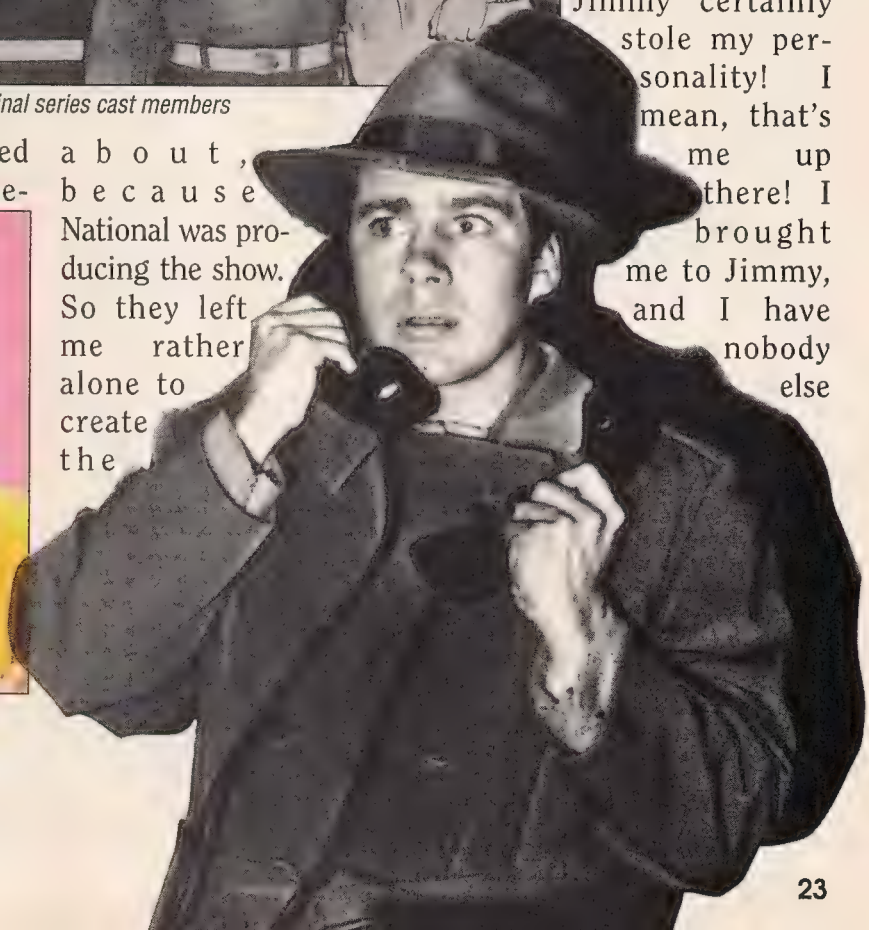
Larson knew about Superman ("I was wild for the comics as a boy" he says) but knew very little about Jimmy himself, "so I got to create him quite a bit".

"Nowadays in television everything is very structured and precise, but in the '50s it was more free-form", Larson points out. "We didn't even have a sponsor or an ad agency to worry about, because National was producing the show. So they left me rather alone to create the character. Tommy Carr, one of our early directors, was a great help, and the writers were always giving me those memorable lines, like 'Oh Jeepers'! and 'Golly'! and the whole 'Chief' thing".

"I think that's part of what happens when you become 'typed' with a role like that, as I was", he continues. "When you don't have much of a definition for the character, you put a lot of yourself into the role, so there's your smile, your voice up there, and there's more of you there than the original character. You've heard about people who are afraid that a photograph will steal their soul...well, Jimmy certainly stole my personality! I mean, that's me up there! I brought me to Jimmy, and I have nobody else



Original series cast members



*Jack Larson today, above, and as Jimmy Olsen in a **Superman** episode, "Semi-Private Eye", at left.*

to blame, because that's all I had to give".

"Oh, heck, I created Jimmy! And the comic book came after me" Larsen laughs. "Anyway, after a while Jimmy became one of the more popular characters on the show, and so in later episodes I got more to do. I think the kids identified with Jimmy".

After Superman, Larson quit acting, and moved into other areas of entertainment. "Luckily, I enjoyed the other areas of the industry. I did a little writing, some directing off-Broadway, and eventually producing", he says. "So I had more...that became my other life".

Larson reacted very well to the problems of being typecast in the early days of television. His fellow actor and good friend George Reeves did not, and Reeves killed himself shortly after the show ended.

"You have a choice-you're either happy with your life, or you're not. There's not much else you can do", Larson comments.

"If Superman had been done today, I dare say George would have been able to get other work, even though he 'was' Superman". He goes on "I mean, a lot of TV stars of today have been able to move into film—John Travolta, Michael J. Fox, people like that. Travolta was really one of the first to really make it away from TV and into films. People like Clint Eastwood started in TV (he played Rowdy Yates on Rawhide), but they weren't that famous from it. George was possibly the biggest TV star ever up to that time. And back then, nobody wanted TV folks in what they called their 'fine product'. And I had the writing and directing to eventually go into...George didn't have that".

"But I want to make it clear—he never complained. He never let it show in his work. He was always the professional, and that was sometimes very hard to do. I mean, here he is, dressed up in tights and a cape, standing around a set. He caught not a little bit of ribbing from the stagehands, you know, the 'tough guys' around the set. And he always responded with a smile...he never let you know how sad he was inside".

After hearing about Jimmy Olsen's current troubles in the Superman comic books, Larson's response was not distress, but hope. "Gee, you think they'd let me play him that way now? I can see it now—Jimmy Olsen in straight drama"!

"He (the actor George Reeves), had an in-credible sense of humor even through all (being typecast), that", Larson recalls. "There was one time we were filming a one-take shot—he was to crash through a prop wall, and if it didn't go perfectly the first time, it would cost a small fortune to set up again. So I'm tied up with a bomb at my feet. The prop man lights the fuse, everybody's in place... two seconds before we roll, George pokes his head around where only I can see him. He winks, blows me a kiss, and whispers, 'don't worry, Thweetie, Supieboo's gonna save you'! He jumps back into place, the director yells 'action', he crashes through the wall... thank God I had a gag in my mouth, I was laughing so hard"!

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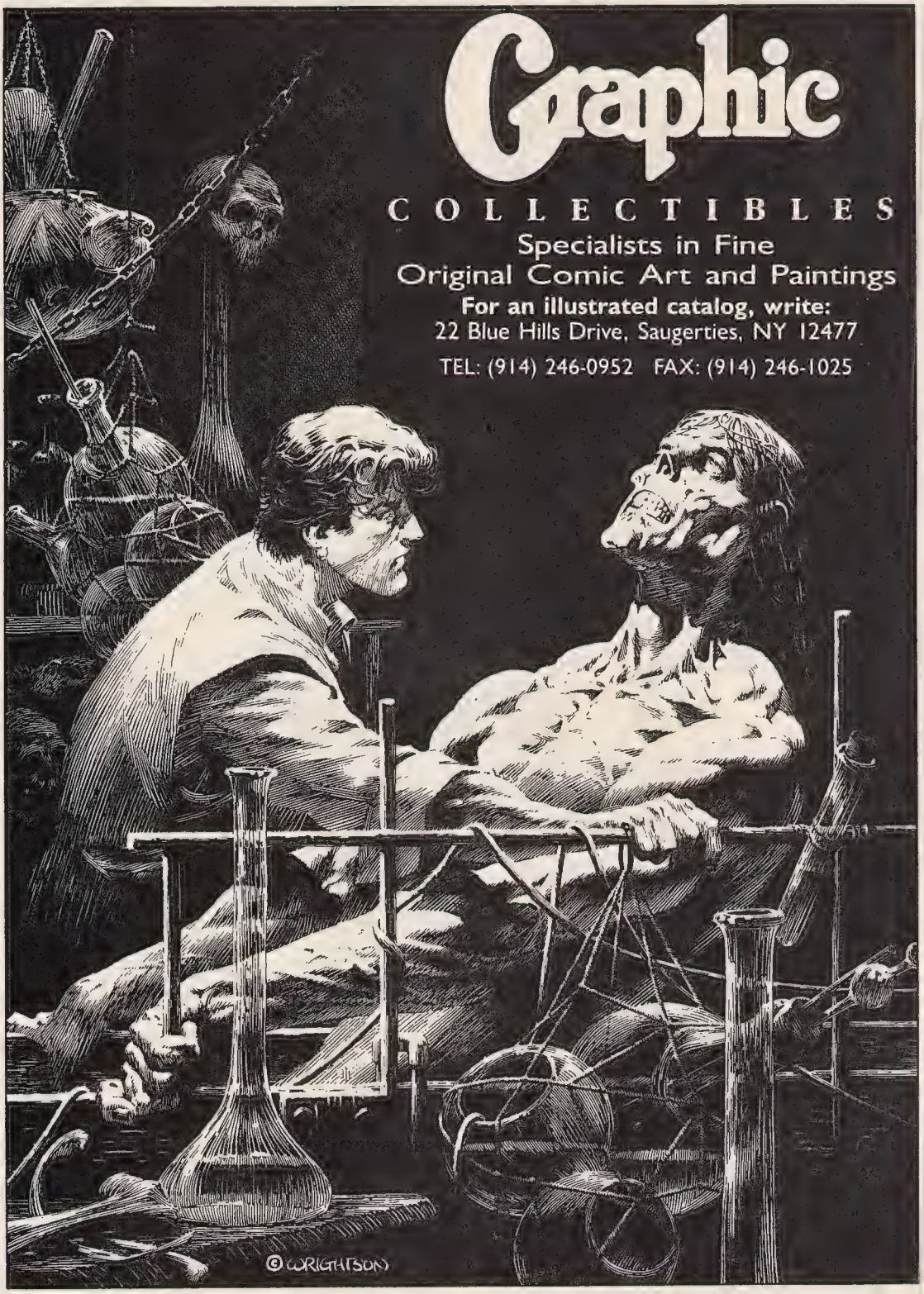

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WIZARD NEWS

THE INSIDE SCOOP ON THE WORLD OF COMICS

Hot artists sign at Malibu Comics

Todd McFarlane, Jim Lee, Rob Liefeld & others begin new titles

As of press time, it appears that **Jim Lee**, **Rob Liefeld**, **Todd McFarlane** and other big names in comics are switching over to Malibu comics and starting their own universe. Projects already named includes Jim Lee's *Wildcats*, a super-hero team, *Youngblood*, another team book by Rob Liefeld, and *Spawn*, a single character book which heralds the return of Todd McFarlane!!

Golly, with this much cool stuff coming from Malibu, how long before we see their books attack the hot charts?

SPAWN by Todd McFarlane

Terminator 3?

"I'll be back." Will he? Rumors abound concerning a possible Terminator III movie. What's being said is that Arnold Schwarzenegger will return as the good T-800, and the antagonist for the film will be gorgeous bodybuilder Rachael McLish, portraying an evil T-800.

Sounds nifty to us, but after the special effects roller coaster ride of T2, it might be kind of bland. Ah well, who knows?

Valiant Begins Crossover

Unity #0 Will Be Free

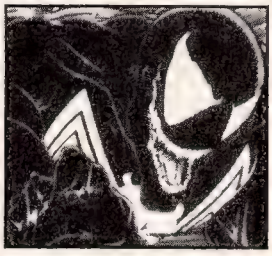
This May and June, all Valiant universe titles will come together into one continuous storyline: *Unity*. To introduce this storyline, Valiant will be giving away copies of *Unity* #0, the 16 page prologue to *Unity* created by Jim Shooter, Barry Windsor-Smith and Bob Layton. These free copies will be shipped to comic stores in limited quantities on the week of April 14th.

Shipping three weeks later is *Eternal Warrior* #1, continuing the Unity storyline. *Eternal Warrior* and *Archer and Armstrong* are the two new Valiant titles being released during the summer.

Frank Miller will supply the artwork for the covers to the first eight of the sixteen issues that encompass this summer's crossover epic from Valiant Comics.

Zen Gets New Format

Beginning with issue 4, *Zen Intergalactic Ninja* will change its format to a three story, thirty-two page book. Heavy Metal artist Jim Fletcher will be taking over the art on co-creator Steve Stern's premier Zen story, "Defend the Earth." Two new features include "Go Towards the Light" by Steve Stern and Jim Fern, and "Explorative Beginnings" by Robert V. Conte and Will Cypser. A second *Zen* title, in full color, debuts this month from Archie comics.



Mark Bagley Leaves New Warriors

Mark Bagley plans on leaving the *New Warriors* comic and concentrate on the art of *Amazing Spider-Man*. Watch Bagley closely, he's a name in the making. Other hot names in the art field include John Romita Jr, Angel Medina and Larry Stroman.

Venom Movie?

Rumors have it that Charlie Sheen will play a black-costumed Spider-Man vs a special effect laced Venom. Sounds too good to be true, so it probably isn't.

A Nightmare™ ON ELM STREET The Beginning

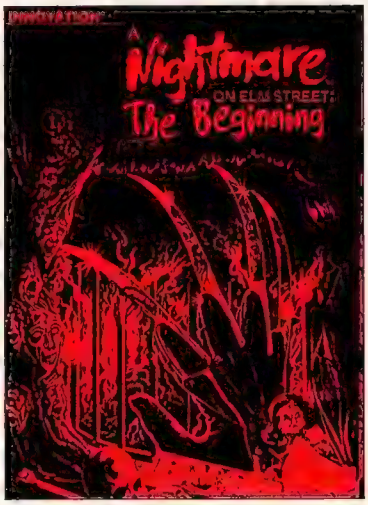
The Dark Genesis of Freddy Krueger

by David Wm. Gibson

Freddy Krueger, the renowned dream slayer, pop culture icon, and star of six *A Nightmare On Elm Street* films, was killed September 13th, 1991, in the film *Freddy's Dead.* But where was Freddy born, and how is he reborn as America's favorite bad dream? Find out this spring when writer Andy Mangels (Wizard's own movie columnist) and Innovation Comics take us to *A Nightmare On Elm Street: The Beginning.*

Following his six highly successful issues of *Nightmare On Elm Street*, plus a three-part adaption of *Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare*, Mangels had several meetings with New Line Cinema to decide the future of Freddy Krueger. What they agreed on was to reveal the untold secrets of Freddy's past.

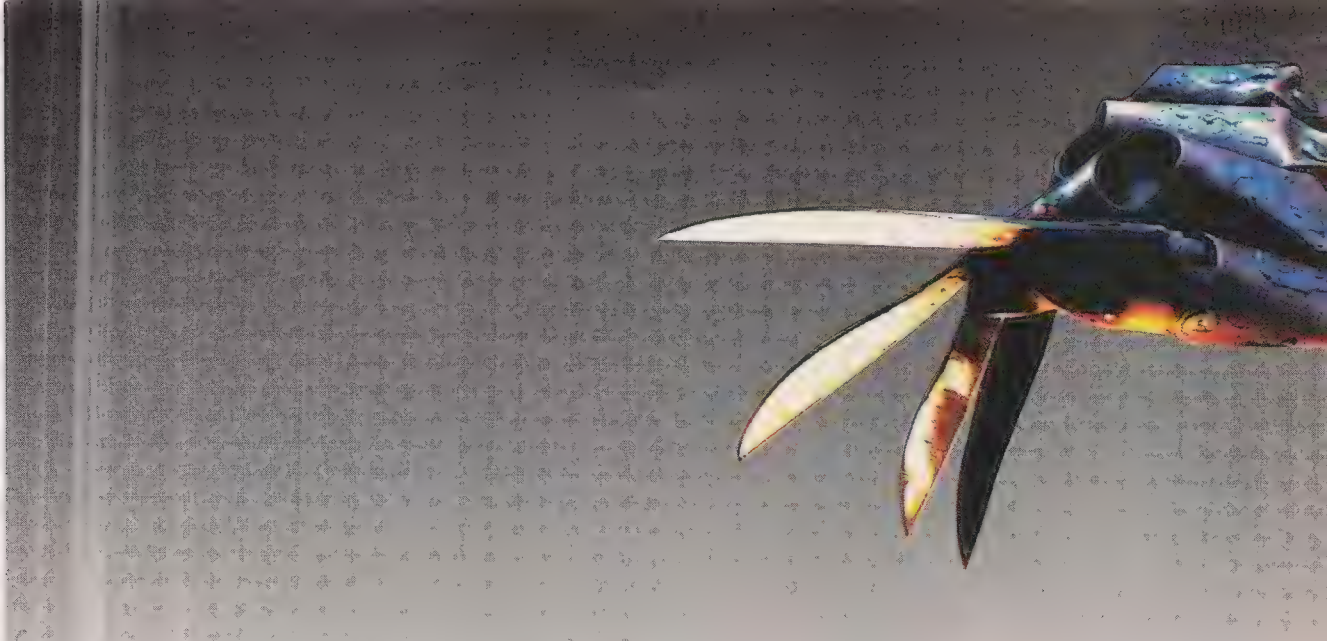
"The full origin and life story of Freddy has never been told before," according to Mangels.



"Each movie has revealed bits and pieces of his past, but the complete and unadulterated story has never been uncovered...until now. Indeed, several of the movies have contradicted one other, and when you factor in the various TV shows, the novels, and the short stories, you've got a very jumbled past for one of horror's biggest figures."

As the four-part miniseries opens, Maggie Burnham (a.k.a. Kathryn Krueger from *Freddy's Dead*) is having nightmares in which she is reliving her father's past. Despite the urgings of Doc and Tracy (also from Freddy's Dead), Maggie decides to explore Freddy's origins, both in the real world and in the dream planes! But will Maggie/Kathryn's search for her roots lead her to a darker legacy that she could ever hope (or fear) to know? Does her heart really belong to...Daddy?

A Nightmare On Elm Street: The Beginning takes its cue from events in *Freddy's Dead.* "In the film, Freddy traveled out of Springwood in Maggie's head, and she later went inside his memories. Even if Maggie



was not his daughter, the psychic resonances of this head-hopping would have some effect," according to Mangels. Not only does the premise allow Mangels to tie-up many loose ends, but it adds bizarre imagery as readers pass between the real world and the dream plane, through the characters shared memories.

The "bizarre imagery" will be adroitly realized by the master-hands of Canadians David and Dan Day, brothers whose work has been seen in many Marvel books, such as *Master of Kung Fu* and *Hulk vs Wolverine* in Marvel Comics Presents, and several spacial projects from other companies including The Cases of Sherlock Holmes. "I'm thrilled to have David and Dan on the book," Mangels said. "Their sense of the grotesque and the fantastique, as well as their ability to portray reality—or a slightly off-kilter reality—will lend strength to the book."

Covers for the four-issue series will be by Cliff Hayes, who designed a special cover style with Mangels and New Line Cinema. "Each of the covers will be linked by a shared border," Mangels revealed, "as well as a creepy image within." And just wait till you see what Mangels and the Days have done with the Freddy-fetus!

Mangels will challenge the artist's abilities as he explores the world of dreams. "We've been touching on what exists in the dream world in the regular Nightmares on Elm Street series, but here we're going to find out everything you'll want to know, and several other things you won't. Who trained Freddy? What are the Dream Demons? What are the limits to Freddy's powers? Is the dream-stalker unique?" he notes.

"Who trained Freddy? What are the Dream Demons? What are the limits to Freddy's powers? Is the dream-stalker unique?"

"Despite the propensity of horror's nay-sayers to lump all horror characters in the same pool, Freddy is not a 'slasher,' and this is not a 'slasher' comic," Mangels emphasizes. "The *Nightmare* movies have always been the thinking-man's horror films, ever since Wes Craven originally conceived of the psychological stripping of protection in the first film. On Elm Street, even your own dreams are not safe. The comic stories are complex tales of horror, thematically and structurally entertaining. In writing the series, I'm much more influenced by the works of Clive Barker and Edgar Allen Poe than I am by EC Comics."

"It's been a treat working with New Line's David Imhoff," said publisher David Campiti. "He's such a fountain of energy, information, and ideas, that he's officially 'creative consultant' on the series. He's much more involved than the typical licensor would be, which ultimately makes for a stronger book. He, Andy Mangels, and I work extremely well together, which is a real plus on a complicated book like this," Campiti explained.

"I've been chastised by people for writing the Freddy comic," admits Mangels.

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"Some people believe that because Freddy is a pop-culture character that he is robbed of meaning, some people believe that horror itself has lost its ability to scare. Many people believe Nightmare movies were weakened with each succeeding film. To those people, I ask them to be open to reading at least one issue."

Mangels had been told by people at New Line Cinema that his writing may be too complex and subtle. But he stands by his belief that if you are a fan of Freddy from the first Nightmare film, you will love what he does with him in the book.

On Halloween, New Line Cinema and Phone Programs laid to rest the infamous man of our nightmares, at a Hollywood Cemetery. On hand were many of the series' stars, and Andy Mangels, who gave the eulogy. The ceremony and accompanying interviews on Entertainment Television and NBC News gave a certain finality to Freddy Krueger's death in Freddy's Dead.

"Now that there will not be any more Freddy films," said Mangels, "New Line Cinema is being very vocal and clear that currently, the only place people will be able to get new Freddy stories is in this comic book series." This unprecedented support from a film company shows how far licensed comics have come, and how much New Line Cinema believes in the quality that Innovation has come to be known for by their artists and writers from such projects as *Quantum Leap*, *The Vampire Lestat*, *Lost In Space*, and *Dark Shadows*.

A Nightmare on Elm Street: The Beginning will be haunting your comic shops in March. The four part series will be bi-monthly, in full "bloody" color, for $2.50. It will be written by Andy Mangels, illustrated by Dan and David Day, and will have covers by Cliff Hayes.

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By Paul Robb

AGENTS

The Ten Percenters

The literary and art worlds have all kinds of agents, depending on what the property is that the author or artist is trying to sell. There are agents who handle novels, poetry, and screenplays. But how many agents do you know who handle comic-book writers and artists?

Mike Friedrich of *Star Reach Productions* is one of the first such agents available for those who work in the comic book industry.

Friedrich has an extensive background in comics. He started in comics professionally back in 1962, first as a writer for DC and Marvel. "I've written for *Batman, Iron Man,* and the *Justice League*", he says. "In the early 1970s, I formed my own company, *Star Reach*, and published comics—only one or two issues had stories written by me. We worked with Dave Sim, Jim Starlin, and Craig Russell—in fact, all in one issue—before they became well known in the field".

"In 1974 we were one of the first independents—we published four titles and used Baxter Book Color. We published until 1979. Publishing was more successful editorially than it was financially and I was forced out of it financially", he adds.

But Friedrich was able to transfer the knowledge he had gained from publishing his own comics and bring it to Marvel, where he helped set up their direct sales department in 1980. After successfully helping start the first sales department which focused on the comic store market, he then went back into business for himself in 1982.

"We were the first agents in this field and we're still the only full-time agents", he says of his newest venture in representing comic-book writers and artists. "We have two agents in the firm and we're expanding to areas outside of comics. We represent in the neighborhood of 40 to 45 clients—that's about 30 artists and 15 writers. It's got to the point where I've lost count".

Among some of those clients are Paul Chadwick (*Concrete*), Martin Powell, Norm Breyfogel (*Batman* artist) Howard Cruse, Eric Shanower, and P. Craig Russell. "We're not limited in our client list. Our attitude is that comics are, or should be, for everybody", he notes.

Friedrich admits the comic market is a visual medium, noting that it is difficult for new writers to break in. "As a former writer, I say that with a great deal of regret", he says.

Despite having started this marketing agency back in the 1980s, business has not

picked up until recently. Friedrich says one reason for this is that "it's my curse to come up with these ideas five years ahead of time. In the last two or three years, we've been able to do fairly well".

He describes the way his agency operates, and how they try to shape the business to reflect the peculiar aspects of the comics industry.

"We're here to help our clients market their work. We see ourselves as a marketing company for creators. We create a marketing plan for the individual—this includes sales work, networking with other creators, promotion of their work, and creating contacts with editors. We do a lot of contract negotiations and deal with compensation pay rates, advances, royalties, and tax reporting", he says.

The agency also handles the submission process if the creator prefers. Friedrich says they find out which companies the creators prefer to work with, find out who are the most receptive editors. "We work with them on all of that. Sometimes for the well-known people, all it takes is a phone call, without even having to mail out a proposal", he says.

Friedrich adds that the agency takes care of the business side of things for comics creators, "so they can focus on creating comics".

"A lot of comic creators have gotten into weird situations and we try to avoid that. We want to get a sense of where they want their work to be five years from now: their goals for success. Money is not always the most important thing, often recognition and creative opportunities are enough. On the other hand, sometimes they do need the money if they, say, have a big mortgage to pay", he continues.

But no matter what their goals are, apparently the creators like the agency's work well enough to recommend them.

Friedrich says Star*Reach is constantly getting referrals from creators and even from publishers. "Word-of-mouth is where we get most of our business. We keep things honest and above board. We work on commission".

He explains that his agency, in addition to representing comic artists and writers, is also representing a retail store consulting firm. Mel Thompson and Associates, who are marketing a software package for ordering comics for IBM personal computers. This software will help cut down on the ordering time "dramatically", he says.

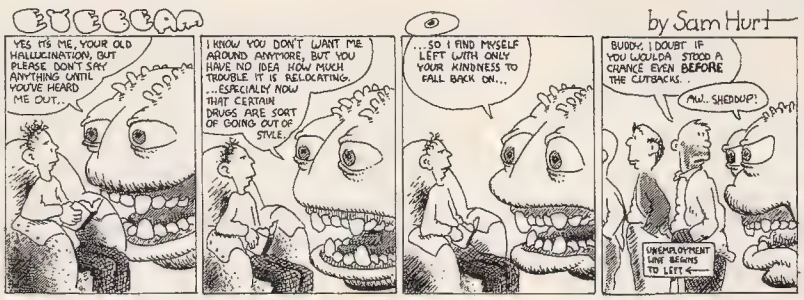
Another project of *Star Reach* is a benefit comic which Marvel will distribute called *Within Our Reach*. The proceeds will go to forest preservation and AIDS research, he says. The comic is due out at Christmas and will include stories and art from Paul Chadwick. Craig Russell (who adapts O.Henry's class tale, "Gift of the Magi"), Norm Breyfogel, and others.

Friedrich says that Spider-Man has also been licensed from Marvel to appear in this benefit comic which has a Christmas theme.

PALMER'S PICKS

by TOM PALMER, Jr.

Let's face it. We all like to laugh. Despite this, the small group of quality humor comics is ignored by the general comic fan. Many of the early comic strips, like *Krazy Kat*, and the early comic books, such as *Mad*, fall into the humor genre. These books greatly influenced the humor comics today, which are mostly black-and-white comics published by small, independent companies.



from EYEBEAM #1, by SAM HURT

Harvey Kurtzman was the first editor of *Mad Magazine* back in the early 50's when it was published as a four-color comic in the EC line. It survived the congressional hearings and the implementation of the Comics Code Authority in 1954 to become the full-sized black-and-white magazine that it is today. The trademark style of satire and parody that *Mad* is known for originated with Kurtzman's editorship. He began by poking fun at certain genres of popular culture like westerns or science-fiction stories, but soon sharpened his focus to specific movies, T.V. shows, and comic books such as *King Kong*, *Dragnet*, and *Superman*. Kurtzman stayed on for five issues when *Mad* became a magazine, and lift to start other humor magazines such as *Trump*, *Humbug*, and *Help!*

Kurtzman's style had a direct influence on many cartoonists, most notably the underground artists of the 60's and 70's like Robert Crumb and Art Spiegleman. In turn, Crumb and the other underground cartoonists provided the basis for many of today's humor artists such as Peter Bagge, Drew Friedman, Mark Martin, Doug Gray, Sam Hurt, and Doug Allen.

Peter Bagge got his start in fanzines, like *Comical Funnies* and *Wacky World*, which he co-published with other cartoonists. and eventually became the editor of *Weirdo* during the mid-eighties. He then got his own comic, *Neat Stuff*, in which he developed his animated cartoon-like style. His characters frequently explode with anger and frustration into twisted forms of flesh. While his early strips were mostly non-sensical stories based around the characters he created, he soon began to develop his creations and place them in more familiar settings. His current comic, *Hate*, uses one of his most popular characters, Buddy Bradley, to poke fun at life

in America.

A student of Kurtzman's at the School of Visual Arts in New York, Drew Friedman, like Peter Bagge, cites the underground cartoonists as influences on his work. His stippled renditions of popular celebrities in bizarre situations have appeared in such nationwide publications as *National Lampoon* and *Spy Magazine* and comic magazines like *Raw* and *Weirdo*. The targets for his comics are usually celebrities from the forties and fifties like the Three Stooges, Abbott and Costello, and the Swedish wrestler/actor, Tor Johnson. His caricatures are so accurate, that Friedman was once sued for libel by late-nite talk show host Joe Franklin.

Mark Martin began in the mini-comics and eventually graduated to full size comics during the black and white explosion of the mid-eighties with *Gnatrat*, a parody of the *Dark Knight*. He has since gone on to create a bi-weekly comic strip for the *Comics Buyers Guide* which has become an outlet for his views on the comic industry and a place for him to introduce new characters and ideas.

Doug Gray, a relatively new cartoonist, is making his mark with his first series, *The Eye of Mongombo*. The book is basically a parody of the *Indiana Jones* movies, with the main character having been turned into a duck. Each page of the comic, including the page numbers, is loaded with sight gags and slapstick humor drawn in an uncluttered, but detailed style.

from THE EYE OF MONGOMBO #5 by DOUG GRAY

Aside from cartoonists specifically working in comic books, there are several artists working in newspapers who have had their work collected into comic books. Foremost among them are Sam Hurt and Dog Allen.

Hurt began his strip, *Eyebeam*, in the Daily Texan in 1978 and continued it until 1989. The comic was self-syndicated by Hurt in about twenty regional newspapers and was collected into a series of seven paperbacks. While the series covers a variety of topics, it is centered around the life of a law student in Texas.

Doug Allen created his character, Steven, in 1976 as a place to vent his anger, and has drawn him in weekly comic strips for alternative newspapers since then. Steven is an irritable boy surrounded by a group of supporting characters that frequently try to take over the strip from him. Allen has also drawn Steven for several comic magazines like *National Lampoon* and *Blab!*

Despite the fact that

there are very few humor comics on the market, there are many different types ranging from finely-crafted social satire to crude physical humor. Only after trying a few will you be able to find the one that will suit your tastes in comedy.

Here is a brief sampling of the major works of the various artists mentioned in this article:

Harvey Kurtzman: The first six issues of *Mad* have been collected in one softcover volume from Russ Cochran. The book is also available as part of a hardcover set containing the remaining comic-book sized Mads.

Peter Bagge: Hate is published quarterly from Fantagraphics and Bagge's comics from Neat Stuff have been collected into four books: *The Bradleys*, *Studs Kirby*, *Junior and Other Losers*, and *Stupid Comics*.

Drew Friedman: Two books have been published collecting Friedman's cartoons from various magazines. These are: *Any Similarity to Persons Living or Dead is Purely Coincidental* from Fantagraphics, and *Warts and All* from Penguin Books.

Mark Martin: Two volumes of *20 Nude Dancers 20* have been published by Tundra collecting the first two years of the strip. A collection of the *Gnatrat* comics has also been published by Fantagraphics.

from STEVEN #4 by DOUG ALLEN

Doug Gray: *The Eye of Mongombo* is published very irregularly from Fantagraphics. Gray's cartoons have also appeared in Critters and as back-up features in *Usagi Yojimbo*.

Sam Hurt: The paperback books collecting *Eyebeam* are mostly out of print, but comic book reprints of the strip are being published quarterly from Double Diamond Press. His *Queen of the Universe* strip is being syndicated by United Features Syndicate.

Doug Allen: Steven appears weekly in various alternative newspapers, and four comic books from Kitchen Sink Press have been published collecting the series.

Next Issue:

VENOM

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On Sale In April!

Andy Mangels Tracks Aliens III

Welcome back to WIZARD"s inside look at super-celluloid! Each month in *Hollywood Heroes*, I review comic book/movie scripts or as-yet unreleased movies, spotlight an actor or writer, reveal scenes from the past, and tell you what's happening in Hollywood's future!

This issue, with the supposedly imminent release of *Alien III* in May, we'll take a look at the long and winding road leading to the film's arrival.

Famed Cyberpunk writer William Gibson (Neuromancer) was given first shot at delivering the long-awaited three-quel. Gibson took his story from an idea by co-producers David Giler and Walter Hill, and turned it two drafts of the script before leaving in January 1988.

Gibson returned to the Aliens survivors some time after the second film. Entering restricted United Progressive Peoples air space, the Suraco is invaded by three UPP military officers, one of whom is attacked by the face-hugger nested in Bishop's cyborg entrails. The Suraco crew is split up as the UPP soldiers take Bishop's infected body (and his knowledge of the Alien physiology) back to their space station, the Roldina, and the Company manages to take hold of the Suraco, her crew, and the newly hatched face-hugger Alien. They're brought to the Anchorpoint Space Station, a soon-to-be-mothballed eco-system craft that the Company now plans to turn into a bio-mechanical weapons testing ground (read: Aliens breeding ground).

Through the course of the story, Hicks and a dwindling number of survivors attempt to escape the newly mutated Alien in their midst. Eventually, only Hicks, Bishop, and a female survivor are still alive. In the end, Bishop tells Hicks what the future must hold. They'll have to be a species united against a common enemy. They must "trace them back, find the point of origin. The first source. And destroy it...The Alien is to biological life what anti-matter is to matter".

It's obvious Hill and Giler wanted Gibson to utilize the Aliens main characters, but every known character seems under-utilized except Hicks. Newt is shipped off halfway through, after contributing little, and Ripley is only conscious long enough to say two short lines. Even the Alien is barely seen until over halfway through the script, having only killed once as the face-hugger (and even then, off-screen).

The script lacks an engrossing climax; its too-abrupt and final ending is more a surprise than anything in the film. Gibson was obviously setting up for further sequels, however, if this script were filmed, it would be unlikely to inspire enough box office to make further films.

It was almost a year after Gibson quit that screenwriter Eric Red delivered his first draft of *Alien III* on February 7, 1989. Red's script seemed an almost definite "go", given that hot new director Renny Harlin had agreed to direct the film.

Red Was given the task of constructing a plot without any of the previously seen characters, as Sigourney Weaver

had backed out by now. The script finds Captain Sam Smith and his crew of Special Forces men investigating Ripley's ship before ending up on Northstar, a seemingly normal American town in the farmlands. We soon find it is in reality, an agricultural space station. Smith awakens in his bedroom in Northstar, the only survivor of his crew.

Too soon, Sam discovers the underground labs of Northstar are a breeding ground for Aliens, as the government experiments to create the perfect biological weapon. Sam is accidentally trapped in the livestock breeding room, where face-huggers are impregnating animals and becoming stranger animal-Alien crossbreeds. "The Pig Alien has the wide torso, tiny head, and little legs of a pig". There's also Pit-Bull Aliens, Cat Aliens, and Chicken Aliens, in a scene reminiscent of the only bright moments in *Dead Heat*. We soon discover that the Aliens are a virus/organism which cellularly recreates the form of whatever it comes in contact with...even inanimate objects such as metal.

Needless to say, the Aliens get loose, massacring most of the scientists and officials down below, before making their way topside to the farming community. There, Smith and what's left of the Special Forces men manage to roust up the hick farmboys into a Harley-riding, shit-kicking, gun-toting brigade who set off after the Aliens with all the arsenal at their disposal, for a showdown at high noon (I'm not kidding).

What follows is a high-tech massacre, with lots of guns, explosions, Alien gore, human gore, "Vasaline-saliva" (sic), "jackhammer jaws" (A digression here. Those two words, and "piledriver", appear in this script well over 100 times, and I really got tired of reading them. Besides, wasn't "jackhammer jaws" the name of a cartoon shark a few years ago?), and more macho stuff than you can shake Sylvester Stallone at. In the end, Red has the entire space station become infected, to become a "living biomechanical blob...its beams and girders...like gigantic tentacles of steel and slimy black armor and flesh". If you didn't expect it, Sam wins.

Red's *Alien III* script seems full of plot-holes. Since when were the Aliens a product of a virus/organism? Isn't the incubation time a little longer than ten seconds to one minute? Why does the Queen in this Script die after laying her eggs? Why does the Aliens' acidic blood only show up halfway through the script? Weirdest of all, why does a farming community in space have Burger Kings, A & Ps, McDonalds and gun shops?

Red's script is fast-moving and action-oriented, but not at all intelligent. It would have blood and ooze-drenchingly fulfilled every gore-hounds' fantasy, but left fans of the earlier films disappointed. In short, this does every a poor sequel is supposed to; takes the general concepts minus important cast members (which are, of course, alluded to), milks them for everything they're worth, throws in some strained tension and drama, liberally adds tons of action and firepower, and ends with false promises that this is the final story.

With Red's draft a wash, D.T. Twohy turned in his draft of Alien III in October 1989. It was to suffer the same fate as the rest, not given a chance for a second draft.

Five nasty criminals are boarded on the Earth-orbitting prison station, soon discovering something lives beneath them...and it's hungry! Smart prisoner Styles get reassigned to the medical lab on the station, where he meets gruff female biophysicist Packard. They discover an Alien that can reconfigure its body, and a mysterious and deadly Company man named Mr. Lone.

After an aborted escape attempt, Styles manages to convince Packard to look into the mystery deeper. What she finds in P-4 is a breeding ground for mutated Aliens, a gallery of creatures from the nightmare realm to be used for military purposes (big surprise, huh?). Discovered by Lone, Packard decides to spring Styles and escape, only succeeding in causing a transport ship to crash into the space station hull, rupturing the metal, sucking thousands of people into space, and waking up the P-4 lab Alien embryo!

Ridley (Sigourney Weaver) playing modest with an old friend. Nice crewcut.

Styles and Packard are among the few people left on the station alive, along with Lone and some guards. They're all about to meet the NewBreed Alien, with only 17 minutes of atmosphere available before they all die! It's a race to the finish for Styles, Packard, and a guard, as the Alien tracks them down before they can get on the ship. They make it though, killing the Alien in a style very reminiscent of the first film's ending.

Like Red's draft, Twohy's script is everything you dread from a sequel; it adds little new information, it only makes passing reference to past films, it wouldn't work as a stand-alone movie. Still, it might have made a good Dark Horse storyline. It's got good action, likeable characters, and a great setting. As a successor to Alien and Aliens, it just doesn't cut the acid blood.

Dynamic director Vincent Ward was brought on and replaced next, only after he ditched another in the endless line of *Alien III* scripts in which the aliens came to Earth (don't know who's draft this was). Ward's idea was to have the aliens land in a floating space monastery and monk-ey around with its inhabitants. Ward was paid off, given a gag-order about the current script (which, as you'll see, contains a few elements from the just-mentioned plot), and will receive story credit.

At long last, *Alien III* started shooting in January 1991, in London. Sigourney Weaver returned to a current script by John Fazano, Larry Ferguson, David Giler, and Walter Hill (though only Hill and Giler are credited). Sigourney apparently had something to do with the writing of her own scenes. This time, the director was David Fincher, seemingly unfazed by the Aliens brouhaha after dealing with Madonna in her Vogue video. He told Premiere "I just make my videos and hope to live them down". Co-starring with Weaver are Charles Dutton, Charles Dance, Brian Glover, Pal McGann, Ralph Brown, and Daniel Webb.

Spoiler Warning!!

(Read no further if you don't want the plot revealed)

Ripley, Newt, Hicks, and Bishop are all travelling in the EEV when it crashes for some reason on the plant of Fury 161, a combination mineral ore refinery/maximum security prison/monastery. All are killed except Ripley, who is revived inside the prison. The 25 men who are left here have all converted to religion and now lead a celibate and monastic existence. Ripley is the first woman any of them have seen for years.

The prisoners are led by Superintendent Harry Andrews, his right-hand man, Aaron, religious leader and prisoner, Dillon, and Medical Officer Clemens. They're about to find out that their compound has been invaded by face-huggers, who first take up residence in the cows. When a prisoner is killed, Ripley is suspicious, but won't share the possible truth with Clemens, her new paramour.

Three prospecting prisoners meet the grown Alien for the first time, leaving Golic, the crazy one, surviving to warn the others. Meanwhile, Ripley finds out from a jury-rigged Bishop that an Alien was on board the EEV the whole time, and that the Company knew. Newt and Hicks were killed for nothing! At his request, Ripley disconnects Bishop for good. When Ripley spills the truth to a disbelieving Andrews, it's her turn to disbelieve; there are no weapons on the planet!

Ripley is confined to the infirmary with the straight-jacketed Golic, but she is stunned when the Alien appears, kills Clemens (and we thought he would survive!) and leaves her alone with Golic! Moments later, Andrews is killed as well, leaving the crew at twenty and almost leaderless. No, now it's time for Ripley to step in.

Her plan is to trap the Alien in a containment cell, by running it down with fire. Losing three men in the process, she triumphs in capturing it, but since we're halfway through, we know there'll be complications. Those complications arrive when Golic frees the Alien. Ripley's trying to deal with her recurring nausea, only to find that she has a Queen Alien growing inside her! As the prisoners attempt to protect and arm themselves, Ripley goes after the Alien solo.

When the Alien runs from Ripley and her Queen, she and Dillon plan to catch the Alien in a lead mold and burn it to death with molten metal. A furious and claustrophobic chase ensues in the tunnels and shafts, resulting in more deaths. It's down to Ripley, Morse, and Dillon by the end, with Dillon holding Ripley hostage to lure the Alien into the mold.

When the Company arrives on the planet, are they there to save Ripley and the others, or do they have more sinister plans? What role does Bishop play? Will Aaron and Morse fall prey to the Company's men? Will Ripley have one final moment of indigestion? Hell, I won't tell you here. Go see the movie!

End Spoiler Warning!!

The final version of *Alien III* is tremendously exciting, a tour de force of action and suspense. Though it leans much more heavily towards the second film, it does take several suspenseful cues from the first Alien movie. Like Terminator 2, it's action packed from beginning to end, rarely letting you catch your breath. Between the action, the continuity from previous films, the brevity of dialogue (few characters speak more than a few lines at a time), and the showdown in a molten factory, *Alien III* may be constantly compared to *Terminator 2* by film reviews. To those not bothered by such things, Alien III promises to be the best ride yet.

Of course, *Alien III* contradicts almost everything Dark Horse has built up in its several mini-series. It's enough to make you scream, even in space.

Hope you enjoyed this column. In a future column, I'd like to answer your questions about super-hero movies and TV shows, both from the past, present, and future. Write in and ask something, and I'll do my best to answer it.

Next month we'll take a trip to Gotham City with the Bat, the Cat, and the Penguin! A totally revealing look at Batman Returns is in the works, right here at Hollywood Heroes!

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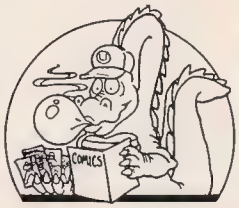

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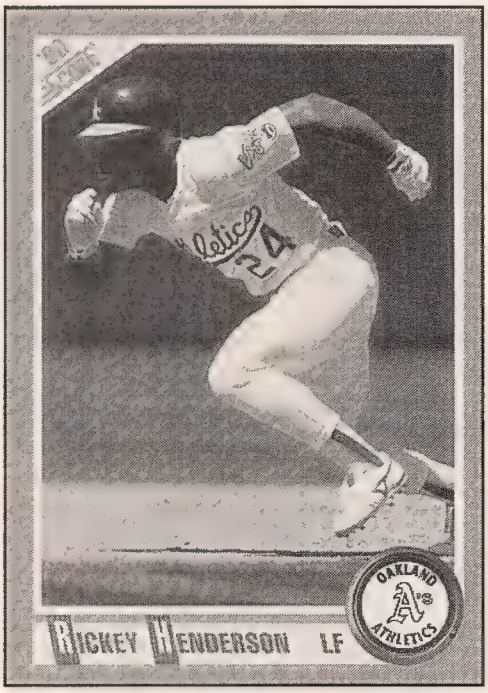

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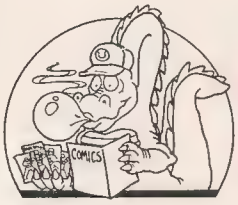

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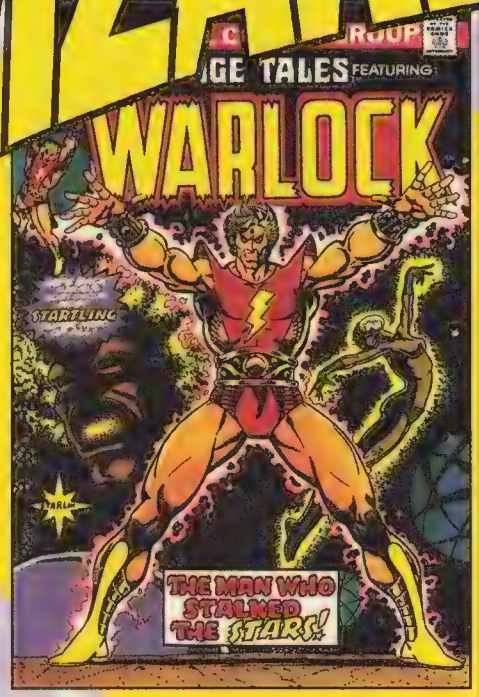

Strange Tales #178

Artist: Jim Starlin
Writer: Jim Starlin
Publisher: Marvel
Release Date: February 1975

Expect the first issue of Warlock & the Infinity Watch to climb the price charts as well.

Hey, wait a minute. That book already sells for $20. Why should I buy it now? Two reasons. First, it's the debut of the Adam Warlock series in this title. Riding a wave of popularity from his appearances in The Infinity Gauntlet and now his own monthly title, Warlock is showing great promise to join the ranks of Marvel's superstars. This being the case, all of his older appearances should soon become highly sought-after collectibles. Second, this is also the first appearance of Magus, the "Dark Warlock," who is the main antagonist behind this summer's Infinity War crossover; this could lead to a major price jump for this issue (Remember what happened to Iron Man #55, the first appearance of Thanos? You have been warned).

COMIC WATCH

Classic X-Men #39

Artist: Jim Lee
Writer: Ann Nocenti
Publisher: Marvel
Release Date: November 1989

As many comic fans know, Classic X-Men used to run a 6 page back-up story after the reprint in the book. In one very special case, mega-artist Jim Lee supplied the art. Yup, you heard right...JIM LEE. From the pages of this obscure title comes what's sure to be a certified gem in the coming months. With all the countless books that Jim Lee has done, most of which high on the buck-o-meter, we wonder how long it'll be before some big $$$$$ appear next to this book - Jim's second work on the X-Men. To further help this book along, it has a nifty Wolverine cover, and the lead reprint is the great Wolverine solo story from X-Men #133 by John Byrne. Cool!

If Classic X-Men #39 does anywhere near as well as Uncanny X-Men #248, watch out!

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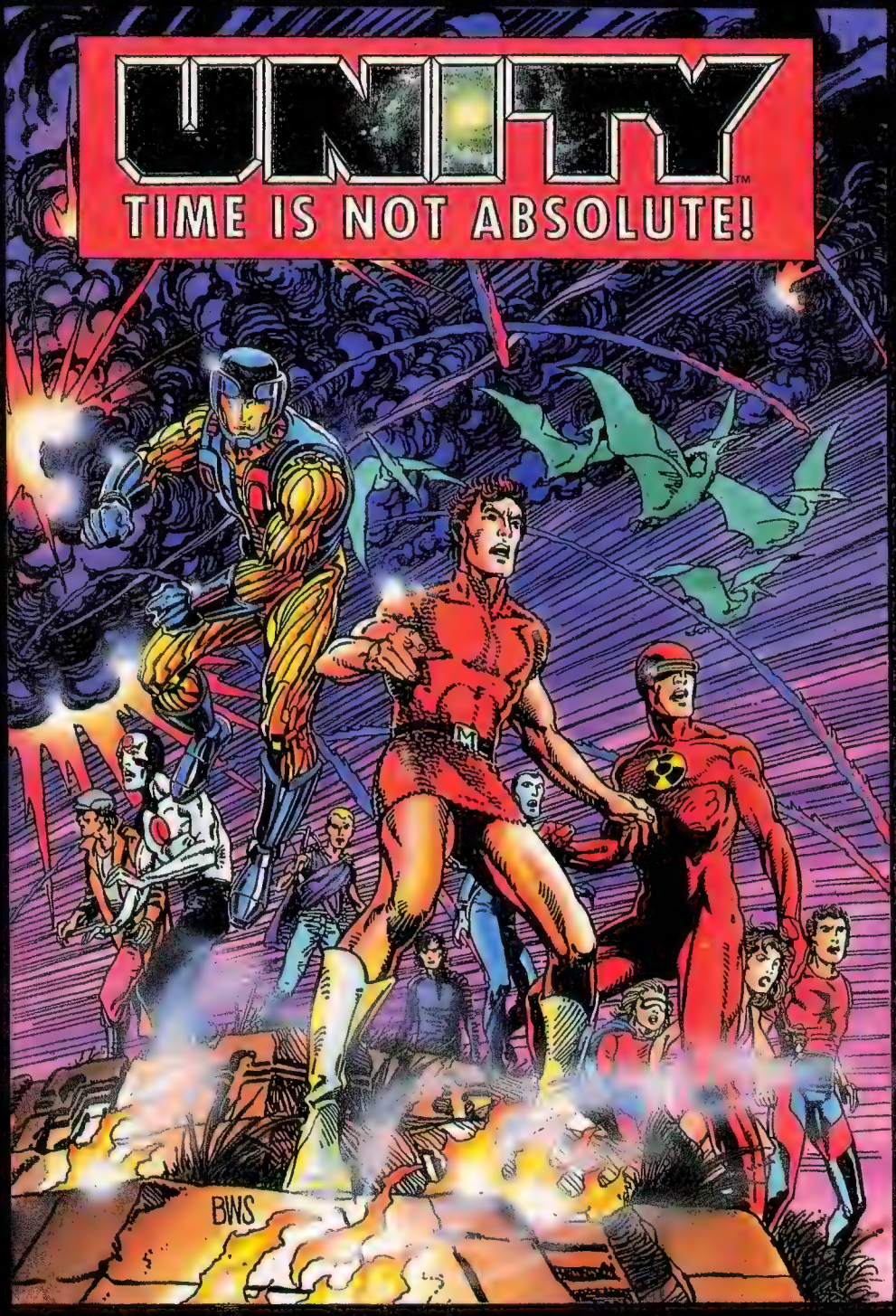
COMING IN APRIL

COMING IN MAY



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VALIANT™

AMAZING ARTISTS

The Showcase Of Future Comic Book Illustrators Of America!

Chris Askham
Nottingham, England

Each month, the best of the artwork we've recieved will be shown on these pages. Submissions can be on any form of paper or cardboard, and can be in any medium (oils, crayon, line art, etc). Artwork must not be larger than 8" x 11 1/4". Do not fold, bend or roll artwork - mail them flat to avoid damage. All submissions are non-returnable. Send yours today!

Presented here are some of the finest pieces of fan artwork we have ever seen. All you need to do to see your work on these pages is send your artwork with your name, address, telephone number and age to:

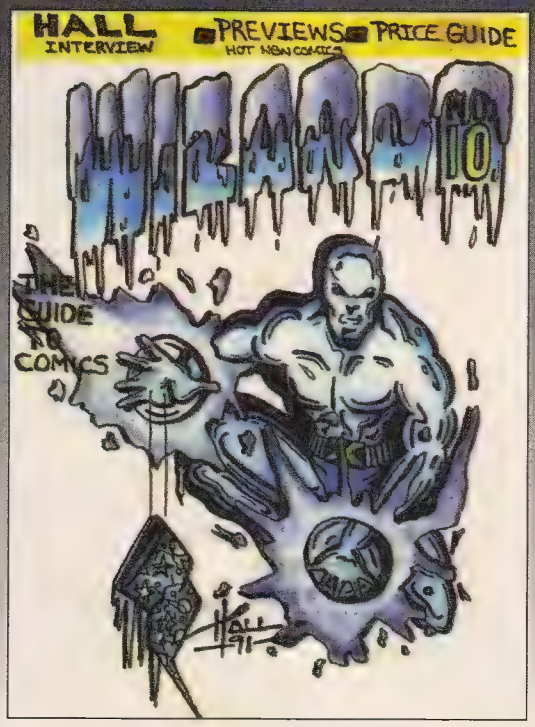
Amazing Artists
Wizard Press
P.O. Box 434
Nanuet, NY 10952-0434

Adam Denton
Albert Lea, MN

Bruce Croussard

Scott, LA

Every month's winner has his artwork, along with his name and telephone number delivered to Valiant Comics where they will look over the work. They'll contact you if they think they can use your talent (how cool is that?). Congratulations, Bruce!



Damon Hall
Chula Vista, CA

Adam Bumpus
Broadview Hts, OH

Jeremy Broussard
Scott, LA

Mathias Fourrier
Paris, France

Simon Adams
Jackson, NH

Bill Cable
Pittsburgh, PA

Pete Marquez
Odessa, TX

Daryl Jones
North Vernon, IN

WIZARD Contest

Grand Prize:

One autographed set of Uncanny X-Men #141 and #142 autographed by John Byrne with a Wizard Seal of Authenticity.

First Prizes (2):

A set of *X-Men #1* (A-E), First printing

Second Prizes (5):

A copy of the Limited Edition Wizard #1 comic con version.

Third Prizes (10):

A copy of *Uncanny X-Men #275*, 2nd printing.

Congratulations

to the winners of the December Silver Surfer contest:

Grand Prize:
Kyla Townsend, Philadelphia PA

First Prize:
Dave Heaton, England
Yao Yuan Zhu, Boston MA

Second Prize:
Josh Dever, Trenton MI
Paul Galloway, N. Richland Hills TX
Jeff McCracken, Hamilton OH
Howard Ryder, Lynbrook NY
James Wilfer, Conroe TX

№ 8

1. England's resident super-team:
2. He's in town with a few days to kill:
3. Before X-Force:
4. X-O...
5. He was from beyond:
6. Founded the X-Men:
7. Robin III:
8. Hawk and...

Enter Now To Win!

Official 1992 WIZARD Contest #8

Entry Form

YES, enter me in the 1992 Wizard "X-Men Code" contest for a chance to win an autographed set of *Uncanny X-Men #141 & 142* by John Byrne.

Name

Phone #

Home Address

City State Zip

Store Name

Address

X-Men Code:

Wizard Clue: Jim & Whilce out of work

CONTEST RULES

Answer the questions in the boxes supplied. In each answer you will find a circled letter. After you have completed all the questions, the circled letters from the answers, when unscrambled, will form the Contest Code Word. Write this word on the official or a copy of the official entry form supplied below.

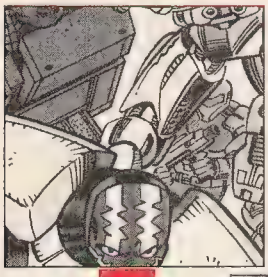
No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press, their immediate families, and Magneto.
Print your name, address, city, state, zip code, telephone number with area code, and the name of the store where you purchase your comics, and the X-Men Code on an "Official Entry Form" or a standard postcard. Enter as many times as you like. Mail each entry individually to "X-Men Code," P.O. Box 648, Nanuet, NY 10954-0648. No mechanical reproductions will be accepted. All entries become property of Wizard Press and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state, and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winners. No cash equivalent or substitute prizes are offered. The prizes will be awarded in the name of the prize winners and are not transferable. Only one prize winner per household. Offer void where prohibited, regulated or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purpose and rules hereof.
All entries must be postmarked by April 31, 1992 and received at contest headquarters by May 1, 1992. Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected or mutilated entries.
Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. The prize winners will be selected in a random drawing from all properly completed entry forms received at contest headquarters. The random drawing will be conducted on May 3, 1992 by Wizard Press. One (1) grand prize- set of John Byrne Autographed *Uncanny X-Men #141* and *#142*. Two (2) first prizes- set of X-Men #1 (A-E). Five (5) second prizes- one copy of Wizard: The Guide to Comics #1 (limited San Diego Comic Con edition). Ten (10) third prizes- one copy of *Uncanny X-Men #275*, 2nd printing.

For a list of winners, which will be available after June 1, 1992, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to "X-Men Contest Winners," P.O. Box 648, Nanuet, NY 10954-0648.

Send To:
X-Men Code
P.O.BOX 648
NANUET, NY 10954-0648

Cover SHOTS

How well do you remember your covers? Below, you will find six pieces from covers published over the last year. Can you tell what covers they are from? Answers on page 138.



A

B

C

D

E

Luke Cage Is Back!

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LIMITED EDITION OF 4000 SIGNED

by artist Dwayn Turner/writer Marcus McLaurin. Includes gold foil certificate of authenticity. To reserve your copies call

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WIZARD WORD SEARCH

How good are your eyes? Try to find all the words that are hidden in the Wizard puzzle. The words appear horizontally, vertically, diagonally, backwards, and every which way. Answers on page 138. Good Luck!

Alf	Legion
Beanworld	Nomad
Champions	Odin
Dracula	Omega Men
Drax	Puck
Dreadstar	Terminator
Eclipso	Thor
Fafhrd	Tulpa
Fly	Venom
Futurians	Vibro
Gnat Rat	Vixen
Grey Mouser	Warlock
Mojo	Zorro

```
O S T A R O T A N I M R E T
S N A O B E A N W O R L D D
N O R R I O S P I L C E A R
A I T B D A L V C A R D A H
I P A I A N U R O H T T A F
R M N V M O E N A M S H E A
V A G D O J O M O D Y L F F
T H U R N S O N A I L E F L
U C R A N I E E P G G O R A
F N E X I V R U X O E E Z G
O R R O Z D C E N S I M L S
A P L U T K C O L R A W O T
```

WIZARD WORD JUMBLE

Do you really know your stuff? I mean really know your stuff? The jumbles below, when properly unscrambled, from comic relared words. Answers on page 138.

Example: RODDOM DR DOOM

1) DEDGRUEDJD
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

2) OLLIEANGNIE
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

3) RIPERSLUG
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

4) NAMIDRAN
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

5) NUPIGEN
_ _ _ _ _ _ _

6) POCCIMIRH
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

7) FROLIRED
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

8) NITHWIGGN
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

9) BECRORE
_ _ _ _ _ _ _

10) NERRATIMOT
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

11) SIMYTINGEFNI
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

12) ROCCASWER
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

13) BRINO
_ _ _ _ _

14) CLUKAGEE
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

15) SHONAT
_ _ _ _ _ _

Comic Book Intelligence Quotient

Do you know comics? I mean really know comics? Match your wits against Poof The Wizard, and let's see how good you really are...

How well do you fare?

#Correct	Rank
0-6	Beat it
7-12	So-So
13-18	Hmm. Not Bad
19-24	Wizard Apprentice
25-29	Wizard
30	All Mighty & Knowing Lord of the Wizards

Answers on page 138

1) Nova of the New Warrior got his powers from a soldier of which race?
A) The Kree
B) The Skrulls
C) The Shi'ar
D) The Boston Marathon

2)It was recently proven that the Predators were involved in...
A) World War I
B) World War II
C) The Holocaust
D) The Great Potato Famine

3) Tim Hunter will be...
A) the comic lord of the universe
B) leader of the Robotech Defense Forces
C) the greatest magician that ever lived
D) master of Earth's children

4) Solar, Man of The Atom is...
A) pure thought
B) pure energy
C) pure antimatter
D) pure beef

5) Which is the correct spelling?
A) Mr. Mxyztplk
B) Mr. Mtzylpk
C) Mr. Mzyxtlpk
D) Joe

6) The Mandarin, arch-enemy of Iron Man, recently lost his...
A) memory
B) lucky socks
C) power bands
D) hands

7) Galactus consumed the throne world of what Empire?
A) The Kree
B) The Skrulls
C) The Shi'ar
D) The Romulans

8) When we last saw Zarathos, the previous Ghost Rider, he was...
A) dead
B) lost in space
C) trapped in Hell
D) trapped in a soul-crystal

9) Which of these two characters never met?
A) Robin and Wolverine
B) Batman and the Hulk
C) Superman and Thor
D) Superman and Spider-Man

10) At one time, the Iron Man armor had...
A) toes
B) roller-skates
C) a nose
D) B & C

11) Dark Horse's Aliens most valuable commodity is...
A) The Queen Mothers Royal Jelly
B) The Drones Life Blood
C) The Workers Soft Acid
D) United States Savings Bonds

12) Vril Dox's L.E.G.I.O.N. was created as a result of...
A) Millennium
B) Crisis

C) Invasion
D) Atlantis Attacks

13) Supergirl is really...
A) Brainiac
B) Matrix
C) Ma Kent
D) a Commie

14) Lobo joined L.E.G.I.O.N. because...
A) Vril Dox beat the crap out of him
B) Vril Dox held his dolphins hostage
C) Vril Dox payed him off
D) he couldn't say Vril Dox five times fast

15) Cyclops's son was recently...
A) sent into the past
B) sent into the future
C) sent into a parallel dimension
D) sent to live with the Shi'ar

16) Galactus has a robot named...
A) The Hulk
B) The Punisher
C) The Colossus
D) The Destroyer

17) In Marvel's Secret Wars,
A) Spider-Man beat up The X-Men
B) Wolverine beat up Iron Man
C) Dr. Doom beat up Galactus
D) A & C

18) Cerebus is:
A) a dog
B) a pig
C) a rhinocerous
D) an aardvark

19) In his own comic book, Solar, Man of the Atom has defeated...
A) the X-O Manowar Armor
B) the X-O Commando Armor
C) Dr. Spectrum
D) Shadowman

20)In the Dark Knight Returns, Green Arrow was...
A) blind
B) dead
C) missing an arm
D) insane

21)What do Deathlok, Cyborg, Robocop and the Terminator have in common?
A) they're all republicans
B) they're all cyborgs
C) they're all members of the Avengers
D) they're all mutants

22) Marvel's Angel (now Archangel) has never been a part of which groups:
A) Defenders & X-Men
B) X-Men & X-Factor
C) Champions & the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse
D) X-Factor & Avengers

23) Luke Cage, Power Man was once a member of this group:
A) Avengers
B) Fantastic Four
C) Defenders
D) Champions

24) Which of the following two villains know Spider-Man's secret identity?
A) Venom & Dr. Octopus
B) Hobgoblin & Mysterio
C) Green Goblin & Venom
D) Kraven & Motlen Man

25) Superman once fought...
A) Mike Tyson
B) George Foreman
C) Smokin' Joe Frasier
D) Muhammed Ali

26) For Billy Batson to transform into his heroic alter-ego, he must say...
A) "By The Power Of Greyskull"
B) "Shazam"
C) "E-nun Chuk"
D) "Flame On"

27) Before Crisis on Infinite Earths, the characters Captain Atom and Blue Beetle were used by...
A) National Publications
B) Charlton Comics
C) Marvel Comics
D) Gold Key

28) Snapper Carr, leader of the Blasters, was once a close friend of...
A) The Green Lantern Corps
B) The Legion of Super-Heroes
C) The All Star Squadron
D) The Jusice League of America

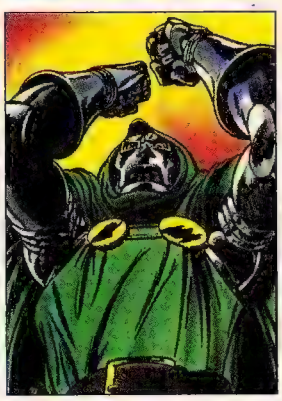
29) Lobo is the last Czarnian because...
A) Galactus ate Czarnia
B) he killed all the others
C) he's an Elder of the Universe
D) his father put him in a rocket-ship when he was a baby before Czarnia exploded

30) Batman has never fought...
A) a Predator
B) the Incredible Hulk
C) Judge Dredd
D) Gareb Shamus

ATTENTION WIZARD FANS

You think you're hot? You think you know something special about comics that your stupid friends wouldn't know in a million years? If so, let us know. Write a question with four multiple choice answers, send it to us, and we'll run it here. Send them to **CBIQ, P.O. Box 648, Nanuet, NY 10954-0648.**

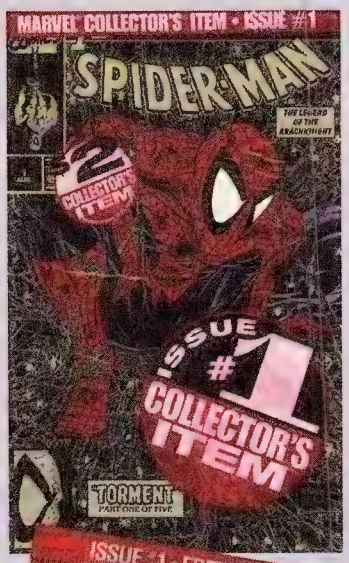
Collecting Comics In The 90s

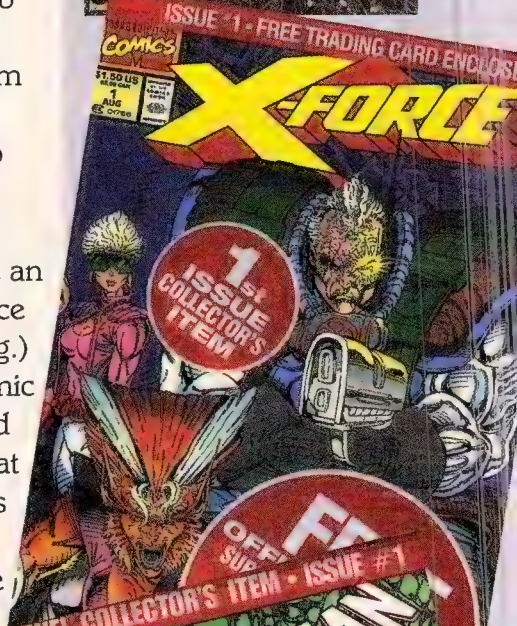


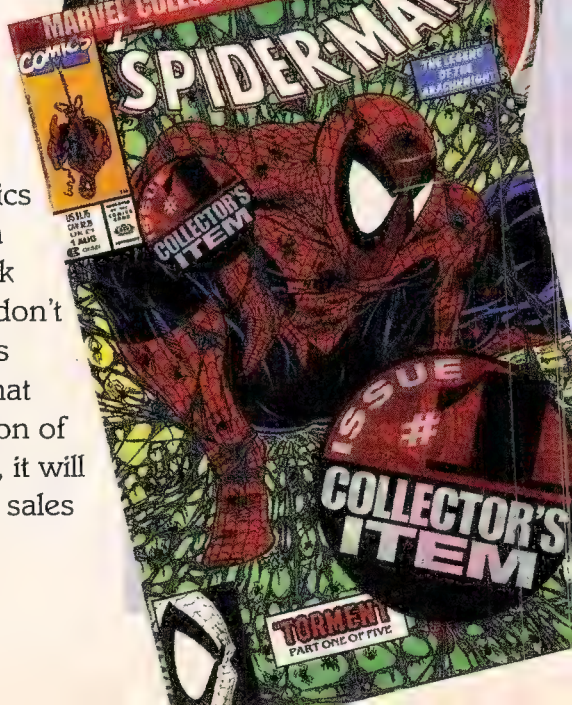
By Pat McCallum

Howdy, and welcome to another edition of Collecting Comics in the 90s. Today we're going to talk about those pesky polybags. You know them from books such as X-Force and Spider-Man #1, along with assorted graphic novels and hardcovers. The purpose of polybagging is to protect the issue during shipping, so no stains, cuts or tears affect the book. Another purpose of the pre-bagging is to make any special promotions inside the book "theft-proof." For example, what would have happened if X-Force #1 did not have the polybag wrapper? Lots of fans would have plenty of cardless copies, I imagine. Polybags were created to protect the comic book, and that's it, no questions asked.

The thought that these poly-issues can become expensive, highly sought after collectibles is ridiculous. I have even seen a fan approach Rob Liefeld at a comic convention and have him sign X-Force #1 on the bag. That's crazy! (Rob didn't make the bag, he made the comic. Think about it...you now have an unsigned copy of X-Force and an autographed bag.) The mind-set of the comic fan is "open the bag and destroy the value." What nonsense. The public is placing the entire value of certain comics on the plastic it's wrapped in, and that's wrong. Here's hoping the companies which produce these comics can come up with a better sales gimmick than the bag, but I don't think so. As long as comicdom wants that "rare" bagged version of their favorite comic, it will still be an exploited sales tool.







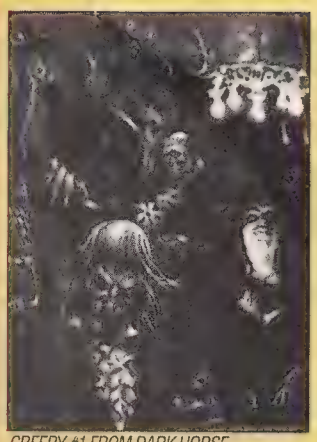
THIS MONTH'S NUMBER ONES

NUMBER 1

Comic book collectors place a great deal of importance on the #1 issues; since it's tricky to determine whether a book will succeed. You have to choose your comics very carefully and wisely. #1 issues have been known to appreciate considerably when a series becomes very popular. Here we have compiled for you all the #1 issues shipping for February. Happy Hunting!

For The Wizard Comic Watchers

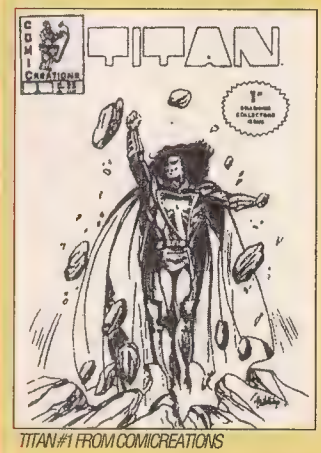
Blitz #1 Night Wynd
Cheque, Mate #1 Fantagraphics
Chronos, Inc #1 Brave New Worlds
Cool World #1 DC Comics
Creepy #1 Dark Horse
Cybersuit Arkadyne #1 Ianus
Dark Fantasy #1 Apple
Dark Shadows #1 Innovation
Dawn of Reanimator #1 Adventure
Doc Savage: Doom Destiny #1 Millennium
Dragontales #1 Cat's Paw
Hard Looks #1 Dark Horse
Hydrolic Press Presents #1 Hydrolic
Idol #1 Marvel
Jab #1 Adhesive
Jackal #1 Boneyard
Lobo's Back #1 DC Comics
Lord of the Dead #1 Conquest
Madman #1 Tundra
Master of Rampling Gate #1 Innovation
Near Future #1 Slave Labor
Nightmare on Elm Street: The Beginning #1 Innovation
Nomad #1 Marvel
Northwest Smith #1 Conquest
Planet of the Apes: Sins of the Fathers #1 Adventure
Sanctuary #1 Viz
Secret Agent X-9 #1 JAL
666: The Mark of the Beast #1 Fleetway/Quality
Skye Blue #1 Mu Press
Slam Dunk Kings: Michael Jordan #1 Personality
Star Trek: Episode Guide #1 Friendly/Personality
Tarzan the Warrior #1 Malibu
Terminator: Hunters & Killers #1 Dark Horse
Terra-X Magazine #1 Insta-Graphics
Titan #1 Comicreations
Toxic Crusaders #1 Marvel
Warlock #1 Marvel
Web Annual #1 DC Comics
Weird Tales III #1 Millennium
Wonder Woman Special #1 DC Comics
X-Force Annual #1 Marvel
X-Men Annual #1 Marvel



CREEPY #1 FROM DARK HORSE

CRUSADERS #1 FROM IMPACT

FREEJACK #1 FROM INNOVATION



TITAN #1 FROM COMICREATIONS

In today's comic book market, grade is one of the most important factors that influences the value of a comic book. There are many grades that fall between the ones listed below; however, the grades presented here are the ones with the most noticeable signs of

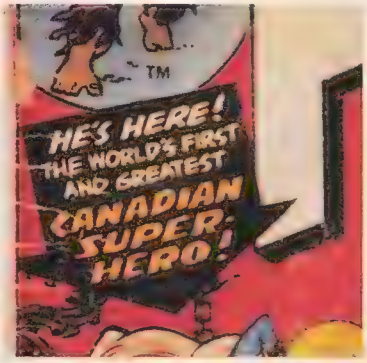
MINT: By definition, a mint comic book should appear as if it just came off the press, flawless. There should be no signs of wear inside or outside of the issue. The cover should be centered, spine should be very tight (no creases), and all corners should be sharp. The pages inside should not show any signs of aging. A MINT comic book could be worth upto 200% of the NEAR MINT value. This all depends on the scarcity and desireability of the specific comic in high grade. Most newer (70's to present) issues in Mint condition are usually valued upto 120% of NEAR MINT.

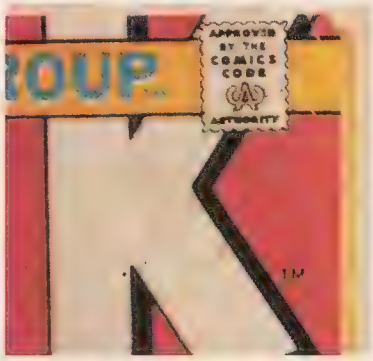
NEAR MINT: A comic book in this grade is very close to MINT. Usually, there is only one small imperfection that will keep this book from being MINT. One of these flaws may be, a cover that is slightly off center, one corner may be slightly rounded, or the spine is very tight with one tiny crease. The pages inside should show almost no signs of aging or wear, with a bright and glossy cover. The comic books listed in this guide are valued at NEAR MINT prices.

VERY FINE: A comic book in this condition will show some minor signs of aging and wear. The spine will have few slight creases, the corners might not all be sharp, and the color may have lost a little luster. There should be no folds, cuts, or markings in any way, on any of the pages. The comics in this grade are valued at 50% to 70% of the NEAR MINT value, again depending on the scarcity and demand for the specific issue.

changes in condition. Grading comics vary from person to person depending on how much they regard certain flaws or imperfections. This guide will serve to help you in the process of grading your comics.

FINE: This comic book is a good example of a well read comic. The cover may show some minor flaking, the spine shows noticeable signs of wear, pages have slightly discolored - showing signs of age, and the corners are rounded. An issue in this condition may have a slightly loose cover, especially around the staples. Although there are still no pages with cuts, folds, or missing totally. A FINE comic book will usually be valued at 30% to 50% of the NEAR MINT value.





GOOD/VERY GOOD: Comics in this range will have very noticeable signs of aging and wear. There will be spine creases, rounded corners, very minor cuts or tears, minor marks (writing), and faded colors. There shouldn't be any chunks missing. This is a very common grade for older comics. Comics in GOOD/VERY GOOD condition are valued from 10% to 30% of the NEAR MINT values.

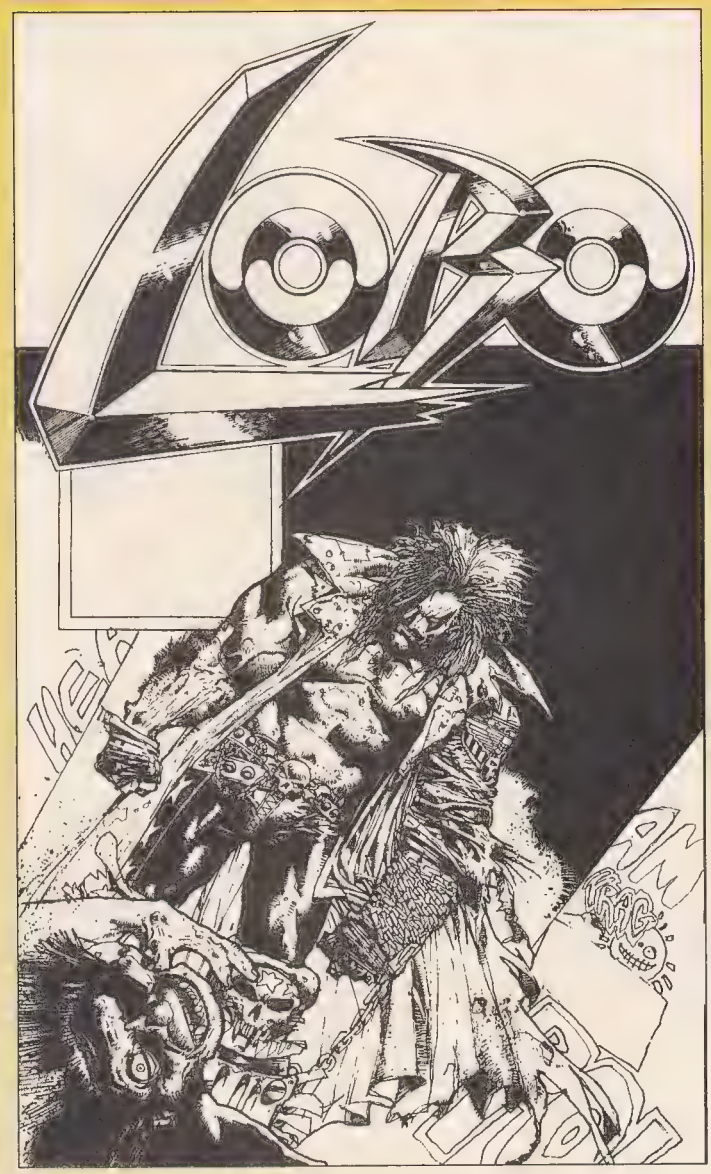
POOR: A comic book in this condition has many defects. Some possible flaws include ripped pages, a bent spine, a small chunk missing, large creases, and very discolored or faded pages. Any comic with unnatural defects are usually considered POOR. Examples include water damage, rusty staples, tape marks, cut out coupons, missing complete pages, writing marks, or stains. A POOR comic is worth less than 10% of the NEAR MINT value.

From The Wizard's Hat

PICKS

Here's a listing of the hottest books shipping in March!

Lobo's Back #1



Artist: Simon Bisley
Writer: Kieth Giffen
Release Date: March 31st
Cover Price: $1.50

Yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah!!! Lobo's back!! God, I love this guy! The main man rules! Rejoice. Happy days are here again...sorry, I just like Lobo. Anyway, on with the show. Lobo's broke, and needs money really bad, so who's gonna help the main man out? Why, his old buddy Ramona, the hairdresser/skiptracer. Y'see, Ramona wants Loo, "the baddest bastich in the galaxy," dead and Lobo is just the man for the job. What Lobo doesn't know is that Loo is just as dangerous, clever and ruthless as he is. The premiere issue of this four issue series comes with four consecutive covers, all in the same order. So if you didn't get enough of Lobo in his Paramilitary Christmas Special, this buds for you!!

Excalibur #50

Artist: Alan Davis
Writer: Alan Davis
Shipping Date: March 24th
Cover Price: $2.75

Alan Davis put EVERYTHING in this book! Who would have guessed that way back in Excalibur #1 that this ordinary (well, not so ordinary), average (well, above average) team had a higher purpose? Nightcrawler, Kitty Pryde, Phoenix, Captain Britain and Meggan joined together to form Excalibur, but all this time there has been a higher purpose, and it gets blown wide open in this special double sized anniversary issue, leading to changes for all of the team's members. And finally, the true nature of the Phoenix power is revealed. Alan Davis is one of the best artist/writer combinations in the industry. Excalibur may not be as popular as the other X-Books, but it's one of the best titles Marvel puts out.

Captain America #400

Artist: Rick Levins
Writer: Mark Gruenwald
Shipping Date: March 3rd
Cover Price: $2.25

Geez, how old is this guy? Ah, it doesn't matter, we all love Cap, and this is his triple sized, gatefold covered 400th issue spectacular (try and say that with a mouthful of saltines)! Now, what's in this ultra-nifty anniversary issue, you ask? Well, for starters, it's chapter 15 in the Operation: Galactic Storm crossover series, where Cap is stranded with a rebel Kree soldier behind enemy lines. Not enough? It's also reprinting the first ever silver age Captain America story, Avengers #4. To top it all off, two backup stories include the untold origins of Diamondback and the Red Skull's personal bodyguard, Crossbones. Very cool stuff. Oh, and Happy Anniversary Cap, may you forever stomp Nazi butt!

WIZARD RULES!

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Ghost Rider #25

Artist: Ron Wagner
Writer: Howard Mackie
Shipping Date: March 10th
Cover Price: $2.75

Okay, if you thought Ghost Rider #15 was cool with a glow in the dark cover, try this on for size. The story revolves around the psychotic vampire, Blackout, escaping from prison and setting his sights on Dan Ketch and his family. After stalking Dan throughout New York, Blackout attacks and, in a special 4 page die cut pop-up feature, rips Danny Ketch's throat out!! Can the Ghost Rider take over Dan's body in time, and if he does, will this trap the Spirit of Vengeance in our world forever? As an extra bonus, Ghost Rider #25 includes pin up pages of the upcoming "Midnight Sons" line of books, including the second Ghost Rider title, "Spirits of Vengeance."

X-O Manowar #5

Artist: Barry Windsor Smith
Writer: Jim Shooter
Release Date: March
Cover Price: $1.95

This is the series that took the comic world by surprise! Aric (our hero) returns to the site of his home, ancient Dalia, only to find that things have changed radically. So now X-O, one of the most powerful beings on the face of the planet, is very upset. But realizing you can't go home again is the least of his problems, as the lethal Spektor sets his sights on the Manowar. FAN ADVISORY: X-O Manowar consistently sells out due to the excellent art and storylines. Couple this with its low print run and you have an excellent little purchase you can actually enjoy.

Incredible Hulk #393

Artist: Dale Keown
Writer: Peter David
Release Date: Mar 17th
Cover Price: $2.50

Yay! It's the Hulk's 30th birthday bash! So, what did Marvel get this half-ton birthday boy? How about a double sized green foil cover anniversary issue! Yeah, real cool. But not only that - famous artists such as Walt Simonson, Jim Starlin, Dale Keown and others have special tribute pin-ups to the big guy. But what is the story, you ask? Well, does anybody remember Igor from way back in Hulk #1? He was Dr. Banner's assistant, a Soviet spy, and was partly responsible for the creation of the Hulk. So now, years later, Igor returns as part of a Soviet delegation, only to be kidnapped by Banner/Hulk, 'cause ol' greenskin wants revenge. If this sounds like a "no fight" comic, think again. The Soviet Super Soldiers come to the aid of their fallen brethren, so you can expect an itsy bitsy bit of fisticuffs.

Nomad #1

Artist: S. Claude Hawbaker
Writer: Fabian Nicieza
Release Date: March 3rd
Cover Price: $2.00

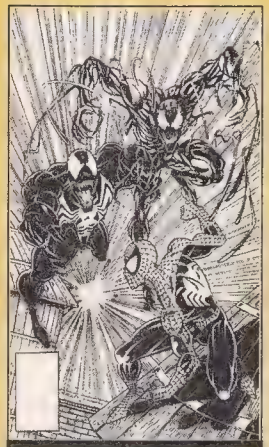
Fresh from his successful four issue mini series last year, this ex-Captain America partner returns in the first issue of his all new ongoing series! Jack Monroe, fed up with how bad America is becoming and sick of fighting it the "good guy" way, has decided to fight back using lethal force! So, armed with lot's of big guns and the worlds youngest sidekick, Bucky, Nomad travels throughout America dishing out justice and shooting holes in people. And if this wasn't enough, issue one has a gatefold cover mapping out where Nomad has been and where he's going.

MORE PICKS

Action Comics #677
DC Comics ***$1.00***
Superman battles Supergirl (Matrix) as the woman of steel defends her new lover, Lex Luthor Jr!

Amazing Spider-Man #362
Marvel ***$1.25***
Carnage pt 2 of 3- Spidey returns to the Venom's island to ask for his help against the Venom-Spawn Carnage.

Animal Man #47
DC Comics ***$1.75***
The original B'Wana Beast returns as something dark... something primordial...and he's out to kill Animal Man!


Amazing Spidey #362

Deathstroke the Terminator #10
DC Comics ***$1.75***
Deathstroke begins the training of the new female Vigilante, but could he be falling for her?

The Demon #23
DC Comics ***$1.50***
Robin had better not get in the way when Etrigan decides to take down a Were-creature stalking the streets of Gotham.

Detective Comics #643
DC Comics ***$1.00***
A mass murderer is loose in Gotham City, and Batman must figure out his motives before he kills again.

Aquaman #6

Aliens: Hive #2
Dark Horse ***$2.50***
Will the cyborg Alien be able to fool the Queen, or will the most potent drug in the universe go unplundered?

Aquaman #6
DC Comics ***$1.25***
This is the final battle between Aquaman and Manta, the murderer of Aquaman's son.

Armageddon: Inferno #2
DC Comics ***$1.00***
Waverider fights on against the Daemons of Abraxis with the help of Lobo, Superman and Guy Gardner.

Green Arrow #60
DC Comics ***$1.50***
Green Arrow and Black Canary will stop at nothing to find a rapist loose in Seattle.

Green Lantern #24
DC Comics ***$1.00***
Now that the Corps are back together, Hal Jordan returns to challenge Guy Gardner for control of the Earth.

Guardians of the Galaxy #24
Marvel ***$1.25***
The Guardians need the help of the Silver Surfer to stop Galactus, as we find out what Surfy's been doing this past millennia.

The Demon #23

Avengers #347
Marvel ***$1.75***
The Galactic Storm concludes as the Kree Empire is defeated, and Captain America must hold back the Avengers from seeking vengeance.

Batman #477
DC Comics ***$1.25***
Locked in a vault with not enough air to survive, Batman and two other people tell each other of their lives, and why they should survive.

Darkhawk #15
Marvel ***$1.25***
Darkhawk is dying without his amulet. Can he save himself and his friends before Tombstone catches up to him?

Incredible Hulk #393

Hawkworld #23
DC Comics ***$1.50***
Hawkman sides with the rebels in the Thanagarian Civil War, but where does Hawkwoman stand?

Hellblazer #53
DC Comics ***$1.75***
Royal Blood pt 2 of 4- John Constantine holds a seance to find out which demon is in the Prince's body, but it may prove fatal.

Iron Man #280
Marvel ***$1.25***
Iron Man begins his quest to find a cure for the disease that's killing him. First stop: the 30th century to meet The Stark!

MORE PICKS

Justice League America #62
DC Comics ***$1.00***
The Weapons Master has defeated the Justice League and stolen Guy Gardner's Power Ring. Before they can even try to get it back, the League has to escape the Master's trap.

Justice League Europe #37
DC Comics ***$1.00***
The Justice League battles Deconstructo as Batman guest-stars.

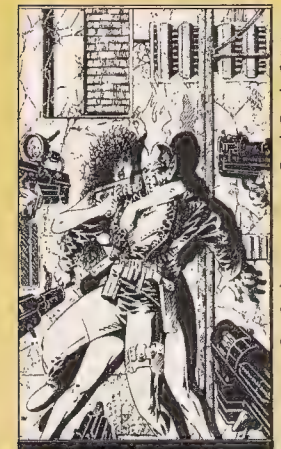
L.E.G.I.O.N. '92 #39
DC Comics ***$1.50***
Vril Dox organizes a LEGION assault against the stronghold of G'odd in the explosive conclusion to the "Max G'odd" storyline.

J. L. A. #62

Punisher #63
Marvel ***$1.25***
When the Punisher goes to a supermarket without his guns, how will he foil a robbery?

Ragman #8
DC Comics ***$1.50***
In this final issue, the Rags will listen to Rory Regan no longer as Ragman is losing his fight against Batman.

Rai #4
Valiant ***$1.95***
The Japanese Civil War of 4001 draws to a conclusion as Rai fights for the unity of his homeland.


L. O. S. H. #29

L.O.S.H. #29
DC Comics ***$1.75***
Full scale combat ensues when the Dominators attack the Legion Subs. Also introducing Monica Sade, the toughest woman of the 30th century.

Magnus: Robot Fighter #13
Valiant ***$2.25***
The Asylum Saga pt 1 of 2-Witness the birth of 1-A's original robot fighters.

New Titans #86
DC Comics ***$1.75***
Nightwing and Deathstroke fight it out for control of the New Titans.

Sandman #37
DC Comics ***$1.50***
Morpheus decides among Barbie, Wanda, Hazel, Foxglove, and Cuckoo...who will live and who will die?

Silver Surfer #65
Marvel ***$1.25***
The Surfer returns to destroy Thanos's monument to Death, but there's someone new sitting on the throne.

Solar, Man of the Atom #10
Valiant ***$3.95***
A new age dawns for planet Earth and vengeance lies waiting for Solar all within this double sized, high-gloss, black-embossed covered issue (whew).

New Titans #86

New Warriors #23
Marvel ***$1.25***
Firestar and Marvel Boy's mother testify against him in court. Is he guilty of the murder of his father?

Next Men #2
Dark Horse ***$2.50***
Some are jailed, others are hospitalized, but all of the mutates are on their own. By John Byrne.

Nightmare on Elm Street: The Beginning #1
Innovation ***$2.50***
Kathryn Krueger begins having strange dreams...dreams of her father's death and rebirth.

New Warriors #23

Spider-Man #22
Marvel ***$1.75***
Spider-Man's gotta finish off the Sinister Six, and with the help of Ghost Rider, Sleepwalker and Deathlok, you know he can do it. By Erik Larsen.

Strike Force America #1
Comico ***$2.50***
Not only do we learn how Monolith fits in to the Oblivion War, but he tries to become leader of the Elementals AND Strike Force America.

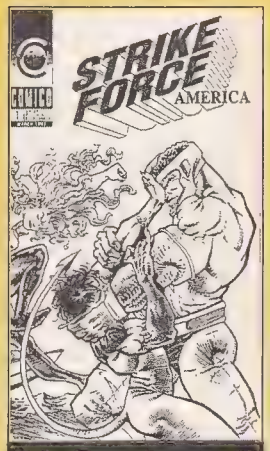
Superman #67
DC Comics ***$1.00***
In the aftermath of Panic In The Sky, a swarm of high-tech vultures show up in Metropolis for a feeding.

MORE PICKS

Superman: Man of Steel #11
DC Comics ***$1.25***
When Flashpoint, a flammable creature from another dimension, is set loose in Metropolis, will the whole city go up in flames?

Terminator: Hunters & Killers #1
Dark Horse
$2.50
In the 21st century, Skynet may be almost defeated by John Connor, but a whole new Skynet has emerged in the ashes of Russia, with new Terminators!

The Thing #2
Dark Horse ***$2.95***
As MacReady and Childs try to kill the Thing once and for all, it tries to escape aboard a nuclear submarine.

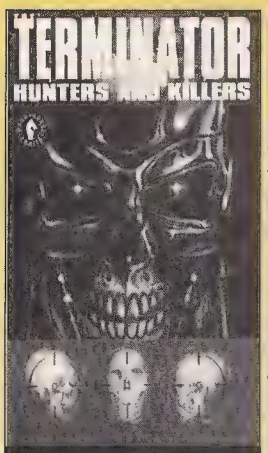


Strike Force America #1

X-Factor #78
Marvel ***$1.25***
X-Factor continues their battle against Stryfe, who is determined to destroy the team. By Peter David and Larry Stroman.

X-Factor Annual #7
Marvel ***$2.25***
Shattershot pt 3 of 4- Val Cooper and X-Factor must stop Stryfe from killing Arize.

X-Force #10
Marvel ***$1.25***
Sam begins to understand the Highlord as Deadpool pays Domino a visit. By Rob Liefeld.



Hunters & Killers #1

Uncanny X-Men #288
Marvel ***$1.25***
Bishop travels to New York to deal with the last refugees from the future and Storm reveals her feelings for him. By Byrne & Portacio.

Uncanny X-Men Annual #1
Marvel ***$2.25***
Shattershot pt 2 of 4- Arize, creator of Longshot and Shatterstar, tries to use the X-Men to overthrow Mojo.

X-Force Annual #1
Marvel ***$2.25***
Shattershot pt 4 of 4- X-Force jumps twenty years into the future to Shatterstar's time and find out their own fates!

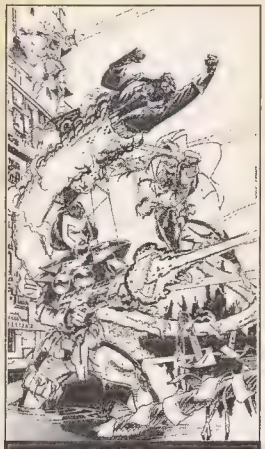
X-Men #8
Marvel ***$1.25***
Longshot and Dazzler get together again as Bishop and Gambit work out their disagreements with their fists.

Wonder Woman Special #1

Warlock & The Infinity Watch #4
Marvel ***$1.75***
To keep the High Evolutionary alive, Adam Warlock must fight the mysterious Omega and his space warriors. By Jim Starlin.

Wolverine #54
Marvel ***$1.75***
Wolverine, Thing, Nick Fury and Gambit try to have a friendly poker game, but Wolvie's got to meet his lost love...Mariko.

Wonder Woman Special #1
DC Comics ***$1.75***
When Cheetah's caught stealing from an evil dictator and sent to prison,it's Wonder Woman and Deathstroke to free her.


X-Force

X-Men Annual #1
Marvel ***$2.25***
Shattershot pt 1 of 4- Starting a storyline that will reveal the backgrounds of Longshot and Shatterstar once and for all.

X-O Manowar #5
Valiant ***$1.95***
Aric discovers that his home of Dacia isn't what he remembers it to be, especially after Spektor moves in for the kill.

Youngblood #2
Malibu ***$2.50***
Continuing the new saga of the Next Generation of Super-Heores with Rob Liefeld. Including 2 trading cards.

TOP 100

FEBRUARY- 1992

Here's the list for February... the countdown of the top selling titles sold as reported by Diamond Comic Distributors, Inc.

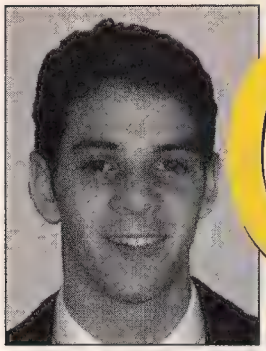
1 X-Men #7
2 Uncanny X-Men #287
3 X-Force #9
4 Cage #1
5 Spider-Man #21
6 Youngblood #1
7 Punisher War Zone #2
8 Marvel Comics Presents #100
9 Wolverine #53
10 X-Factor #77
11 Amazing Spider-Man #361
12 Warlock & The Infinity Watch #3
13 Ghost Rider #24
14 Punisher #62
15 Deathlok #10
16 Incredible Hulk #392
17 Batman: Gotham Nights #2
18 New Warriors #22
19 Marvel Comics Presents #99
20 Aliens: Hive #1
21 Silver Surfer #64
22 Justice League Spectacular #1
23 Legend of the Dark Knight #29
25 Punisher Armory #3
26 Batman #476
27 Aliens: Genocide #3
28 Excalibur #49
29 Thor #446
30 Punisher War Journal #41
31 Predator: Bloody Sands of Time #2
32 Web of Spider-Man #87
33 Spectacular Spider-Man #187
34 Armageddon: Inferno #1
35 Captain America #399
36 Justice League America #61
37 Avengers #346
38 Star Wars: Dark Empire #2
39 Iron Man #279
40 Sleepwalker #11
41 Guardians of the Galaxy #23
42 Detective Comics #643
43 Fantastic Four #363
44 Daredevil #303
45 Terminator: Enemy Within #4
46 Next Men #0
47 Avengers West Coast #81
48 Namor #25
49 What If? #36
50 Wonder Man #8
51 Deathstroke, The Terminator #9
52 Moon Knight #37
53 Quasar #33
54 Sandman #37
55 Alpha Flight #107
56 Green Lantern #23
57 Nam #67
58 Superman: The Man of Steel #10
59 Superman #66
60 Adventures of Superman #489
61 Action Comics #676
62 Death's Head II #2
63 Thing #1
64 New Titans #85
65 Aquaman #5
66 Star Trek: The Next Generation #30
67 Star Trek #30
68 Ragman #7
69 Dr. Strange #40
70 L.E.G.I.O.N. '92 #38
71 Flash #61
72 Young Indiana Jones Chronicles #1
73 Demon #22
74 Legion of Super-Heroes #28
75 She-Hulk #38
76 Green Arrow #59
77 X-Men Classic #70
78 Warlord #4
79 Brave & The Bold #5
80 G.I. Joe #123
81 Magnus: Robot Fighter #12
82 Ray #3
83 Marvel Super Heroes Special #9
84 Shield #34
85 Conan #255
86 Doom Patrol #54
87 Hawkworld #22
88 Shadowman #1
89 Hellblazer #52
90 Groo the Wanderer #88
91 T.M.N.T. #44
92 Cyberrad Vol 2 #2
93 Black Hood #5
94 World Championship Wrestling #1
95 Animal Man #46
96 Dark Horse Presents #59
97 Solar, Man of the Atom #9
98 Suicide Squad #64
99 Elongated Man: Europe '92 #4
100 Comet #10

TOP TEN - FEBRUARY 1990

1 Batman #448
2 Batman #449
3 Legends of the Dark Knight #8
4 Uncanny X-Men #262
5 Detective Comics #615
6 Green Lantern #1
7 Amazing Spider-Man #333
8 Wolverine #25
9 Detective Comics #616
10 Punisher Annual #3

TOP TEN - FEBRUARY 1989

1 Uncanny X-Men #247
2 Uncanny X-Men Annual #13
3 Batman #434
4 Excalibur #11
5 X-Factor #43
6 Wolverine #10
7 Amazing Spider-Man #318
8 She-Hulk #4
9 Justice League Europe #3
10 Batman Annual #13



THE WIZARD OF CARDS

By Stephen Shamus

The football season is finally over, thank goodness. I think there were just way too many football sets this year. Add to this all the series II updates and high end sets, this was the craziest football season yet. Let's hope it doesn't continue next year.

The Upper Deck basketball has really excited the basketball market. Dikenbe Motombo is the hottest card, selling anywhere between $10-13. The Upper Deck hockey set has also seen a lot of action in the past month due to the great crop of young talent found in this year's set. This includes N. Lindstrom, K. Todd, T. Amonte, K. Weight and others.

Score will be releasing its update set for hockey again. Once again, this year's update will only be in English. It's a loaded set with plenty of young talent including S. Neidermeyer, P. Falloon and N. Lindstrom just to name a few.

Score's football update set seems to be a real keeper this year, too! It looks like Score didn't print too many cases of these. It's not as scarce as last year's update, which is now selling for $75 and up, but it's certainly a great set with cards of Leonard Russell, Ricky Ervins, Harvey Williams, Todd Marinovich, Dan McGwire and many more.

The hottest cards in football right now are '89 Score Barry Sanders, Mark Rypien, Thurman Thomas, '90 Score Update Emmitt Smith and '91 Topps Stadium Ricky Ervins. In basketball, they're '86 Fleer Jordan, '88 Fleer Pippen, '89 Hoops I Robinson, '91 Upper Deck Mutanbo and Johnson. In hockey the hottest cards are mostly the younger, newer stars like Jeremy Roenick, Pat Falloon, Niklas Lidstrom, etc. The market finally seems to be back in place after a few soft months there. This is a very good sign of things to come.

DC Cosmic Cards! X-Men! Marvel Universe!

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CARDS! COMICS! ORIGINAL ART!

Toying Around

With Brian Cunningham

Psst! C'mere. I've got something that you don't. Wanna know what it is? Well, okay, it's a U.S.Agent action figure. You're probably thinking, "Wha-a-at?! They made one and I didn't know about it?!"

Stay calm. They didn't really. Actually, I made it (Okay, I'm lying. Pat McCallum made it 'cause he's such a swell guy). Just think...who does U.S.Agent look like? Captain America, right? And Captain America is sold in every major toy store in America, right? All you have to do is buy one Cap figure (or, in my case, two or three 'cause I'm destined to mess up at least once), paint over it, and -whammo- you've got yerself a peachy U.S.Agent figure! Not bad, eh?

U.S.Agent is probably the easiest to make because of the near-exact resemblance to Cap. Also, you can buy a Toy Biz Cap figure anywhere and it's pretty cheap. I bring money into this for a reason. Let's say you want to make a figure with the Super Powers Cyborg. You wouldn't want to do that given the fact that it's worth over a hundred bucks. Obviously, you would just want to use recently released figures as a base model for the character you wish to create. It's a heckuva lot cheaper that way. Of course, if you're a bit eccentric, I'm not stopping you.

The process of making your own figures is very easy (I know I said how already, but I'm repeating it for slow learners like me). First you buy your figure that you think could look like, say, Frogman. Next, you can prime the figure with paint if you have to do the entire figure, or you can zip right to painting the figure in the places you want to re-color. Then, you can add whatever accessories you want (i.e., a shield, gun, frying pan, etc). By the way, modelling paint is just fine for the painting.

I bet you're wondering who you can transform to look like a certain character. Well, I've come up with a few interesting transformation ideas, although I haven't really used any. I guess I'll leave that to you (and send me pictures, I'd love to see them!). But, anyway, you can make Hawkeye out of Wolverine, X-O Manowar out of Iron Man, Black Panther out of Daredevil, the gray Hulk out of the green one, D-Man out of Wolverine, Deathlok out of Silver Surfer, Bishop (with a lot of work) out of Colossus, Lobo out of Thor(?), and Wonder Man out of Punisher, to name only a few. I'm sure you can think of others.

Certainly, this technique could null and void our little "wish figure" contest, but I hope not. Even still, making your own figures can be a whole lot of fun, as well as fulfilling when you are the envy of all your friends. Remember - the figure is yours and no one else will ever have the same; it's like you have your own "limited edition" or something. Come to think of it, I'm making my very own "limited editon" Gareb Shamus figure out of the Hulk. Hope he likes it...

Contest results:

1) Ghost Rider
2) Cable
3) Darkhawk
4) New Robin
5) Nova
6) Sleepwalker
7) Lobo
8) Sabretooth
9) Fantastic Four
10) Thanos
11) Captain Atom
12) Fin Fang Foom (?why?)

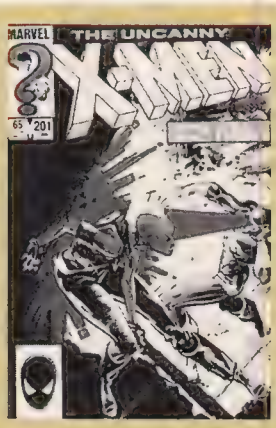
How could they make a figure of the Golden Pharoh and not me?! Who the Hell is the Golden Pharoh?!

TOP 10 MARCH- 1992

We keep a very close watch on all the hottest books trading hands throughout the country. Here we have listed for you the 10 most commonly sold and demanded comics

1 Uncanny X-Men #201

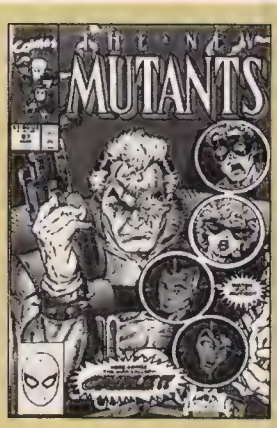
Artist: Rick Leonardi & Whilce Portacio
Writer: Chris Claremont



Yeow! After slipping one spot in the hot charts last month, the first Whilce Portacio X-Men art has hurdled over some pretty stiff competition and has wrested the coveted #1 spot from the mighty Rob Liefeld. Now, what is it about this book that toppled the first appearance of Cable from the charts? How about the first appearance of...Cable! Well, that's the rumor, anyway. Y'see, this is the first appearance of the infant Nathan Summers, who was taken into the future and may have returned as the full grown Cable!! (seems like a soap opera, don't it?)

2 New Mutants #87

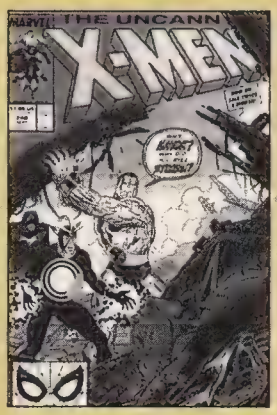
Artist: Rob Liefeld
Writer: Fabian Nicieza



Three months at the top ten, and finally it was ousted by the "mystery baby" issue of Uncanny X-Men. But can even that heavy hitter keep down the bonafide first appearance of Cable? Not as far as Rob Liefeld is concerned. As we speak, Rob is loading one of his nifty futuristic-type guns, adjusting his bionic left arm, and taking aim at Uncanny X-Men #201...

3 Uncanny X-Men #248

Artist: Jim Lee
Writer: Chris Claremont



Jim "8.2 million" Lee is still battling for the prestigious #1 spot. Even after being pushed back a notch after the #1 war between Uncanny X-Men #201 and New Mutants #87, the first ever Jim Lee art on X-Men continues to be a hot fan favorite. Add his growing fan praise, thanks to the current Wolverine/Omega Red/Longshot storyline in X-Men, and you have a serious contender for the #1 spot.

4 Uncanny X-Men #266

Artist: Mike Collins
Writer: Chris Claremont

Gambit Gambit Gambit. You heard me, Gambit. He's the hot X-Man with the power to melt women's hearts and make back issues really scorch - His first appearance in particular. If you were one of the lucky ones and picked this gem up back when we ran it in the "Wizard Comic Watch," congrats! Just goes to show you, watch Wizard and win!

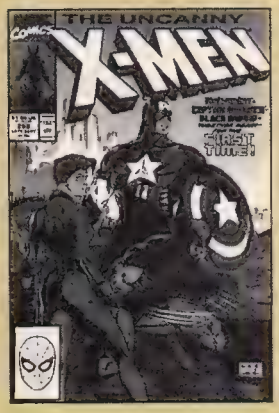
5 X-Factor #24

Artist: Walt Simonson
Writer: Louise Simonson

Holding its own at the #5 position, the first full appearance of Archangel is still a must for mutant fans everywhere. I wonder if Walt & Weezie knew what they were starting when they created this guy? As a side note, for those of you who were worried about John Byrne reverting Archy back into ol' Angel, worry no longer. John's talking about personality, not outward appearance or behavior.

6 Uncanny X-Men #268

Artist: Jim Lee
Writer: Chris Claremont



Jim Lee's first issue as regular artist for those wacky mutants moves two spots up the charts, bypassing some pretty big bad boys. Aside from this being an important issue because of Jim and all, it also has a mega cool WWII flashback story starring Wolverine, the Black Widow and Captain America. Jim's rendition of the good Captain is incredible. Check out this issue's splash page...Wow!

7 Uncanny X-Men #282

Artist: Whilce Portacio
Writer: John Byrne

FINALLY moving up the charts is the first appearance of that hot mutant from the future, Bishop (yup, that guy on our cover)! With Bishop now playing a major role in the X-Men, and a possible romance starting with Storm (hey, hubba hubba), this bad boy's heatin' up the charts. How could you not like this guy? Cool "M" tattoo over his eye, too.

8 Uncanny X-Men #281

Artist: Whilce Portacio
Writer: John Byrne

Waaaaaay back (about six months ago) when X-Men #1 came out, it cast a pretty heavy shadow over all other comics this month. Under that shadow came Uncanny #281, Whilce Portacio's first work on the book as penciller and plotter, as well as the first appearance of the new Uncanny team. All in all, a really cool issue, without a real silly print run (a ton of major characters die in this issue as well, as an added plus! Sounds kinda morbid, but it does boost sales).

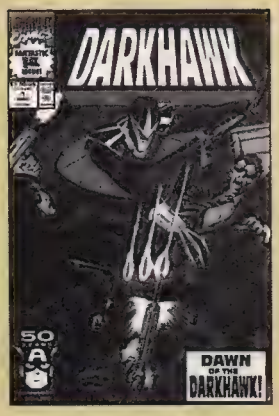
9 Ghost Rider #1

Artist: Javier Saltares
Writer: Howard Mackie

Entering the top ten at the #9 position is the hot headed spirit of vengeance, Ghost Rider! Yup, that wacky flaming skeleton is leaving smoking tire treads all over the charts, and his sights are set for the #1 spot! With art and writing that's consistently some of the best in the business, Rider's gonna really turn on the juice in '92 (watch for the pop up Ghost Rider #25 - really sick stuff)!!

10 Darkhawk #1

Artist: Mike Manley
Writer: Danny Fingeroth



Soaring into the top ten charts is one of Marvel's hottest new characters, Darkhawk!! Making his debut in his premiere issue, this mysterious hero is making major waves in comicdom. His current battle with Spider-Man villain Venom (in Darkhawk #13 & 14) has drawn huge fan attention, and Darkhawk may very well climb the charts a lot sooner than you think!

WIZARD Market Watch

* Is it live or is it memorex? The mutant comics from Marvel continue their juggernaut-like reign over the comic industry. With talent like Jim Lee, Whilce Portacio, Rob Liefeld, Peter David and John Byrne, the X-Dynasty of Marvel appears to be on very solid footing. Can anything break the mutant road block and reach the #1 spot? Only time will tell.

* Ranking high on the top 100 chart is the debut of Cage, Marvel's revitalization of the old Luke Cage: Hero For Hire series. Sporting a nifty acetate cover, this should do fairly well in the comic world. Anyone notice the big push Marvel has given to black super-heroes? Bishop, Cage, Night Thrasher, Rage, Deathlok and Punisher (for a while, anyway) are all black heroes Marvel has gone out of their way to promote. It's about time. Good going Marvel, keep up the good work!

* YOUNGBLOOD #1. Hold on to your hats, 'cause Rob Liefeld just might shoot it off! The super-hot Levis-wearin' Liefeld has come out of the shadow of Cable and X-Force and, along with Malibu Comics, created a whole new universe of characters! With names like Shaft, Diehard, Bedrock and Vogue, along with that cool Liefeld look (and hot Liefled writing style) this is a book definitely worth your time (and hey, trading cards in each issue)!

* Some other hot news in comicdom includes Northstar's startling revelation in Alpha Flight #106. For those of you with no contact to the outside world, that's the issue where Northstar reveals that he is gay. This sparked nationwide media coverage, and the book is now commanding a serious price tag (there's a second print on the way). Another book receiving the hot spotlight is Darkhawk #13, the first in a two part storyline featuring Venom. Check 'em out.

* DC's new revitalized Justice League line of books has also gained some new fan focus. Check out the new team line ups including Superman (cool) and Hal Jordan (the real Green Lantern). Very cool stuff.

* Valiant comics continues to be a consistent reliable source for fresh new stories and truly outstanding art. And it

is now finally beginning to show. Try and find some of those Harbinger, Solar or X-O back issues. They're becoming rare, and the dollar signs are moving up there. On that note, the aforementioned Malibu Comics is another independent comic company that you should keep an eye on. Mondo cool stuff on the horizon (and we're not kidding).

* Marvel's current crossover "Galactic Storm" is selling pretty well but prices have yet to make any move. If you're selling the crossovers well, don't hold back. And if you're out there buying them, don't go crazy. The track record for these kinds of crossovers is not so great, and this current series is nothing special.

* On the down side is the Batman like of books for DC Comics. Prices take a bit of a slip for the old Dark Knight Detective. Even with Batman II in the works, and a lot of media coverage expected in the coming months, Batman is going to need a helping hand out of his current state.

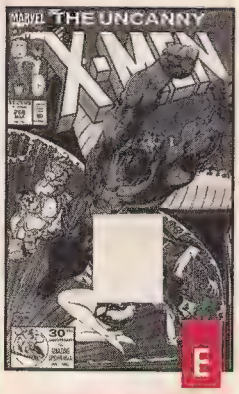
* On the flip side, the "Panic In The Sky" storyline running through all four Superman titles is doing quite well. The storyline revolves around the re-introduction of Supergirl into the DC Universe, and features guest stars galore. The likes of Batman, Deathstroke, Agent Liberty, Green Lantern and more makes this a series witch may surprise you.

* The Dark Horse line of movie related comics appears to have stabilized after taking a bit of a slide in the last few issues of the Wizard Price Guide. For you Alien, Predator, Terminator and Indiana Jones fans out there (not to mention Star Wars and The Thing), pick up a Dark Horse movie tie-in comic - they're not the kings of movie comics for nothing!

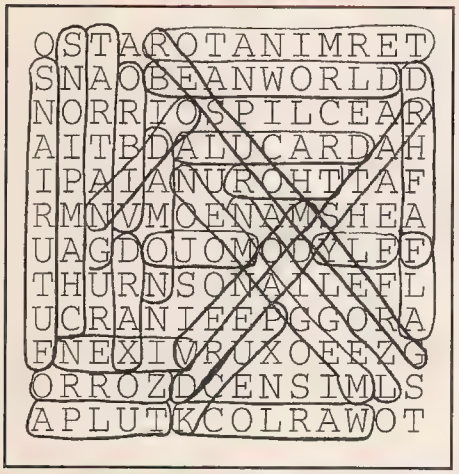
FROM FEBRUARY TO MARCH

Alpha Flight #106 from $2.50 to $12.00
Iron Fist #14 from $42.00 to $75.00
Uncanny X-Men #201 from $10.00 to $22.00

COVER SHOTS from page 54



WORD SEARCH from p. 55



C.B.I.Q.

from pages 56 & 57

1)A 2)A 3)C
4)B 5)A 6)D
7)B 8)D 9)C
10)D 11)A 12)C
13)B 14)A 15)B
16)B 17)D 18)D
19)A 20)C 21)A
22)D 23)B 24)C
25)D 26)B 27)B
28)D 29)B 30)D

Word Jumble

from page 55

1) Judge Dredd
2) Alien Legion
3) Supergirl
4) Mandarin
5) Penguin
6) Microchip
7) Firelord
8) Nightwing
9) Cerebro
10) Terminator
11) Infinity Gems
12) Scarecrow
13) Robin
14) Luke Cage
15) Thanos

Silver Surfer Contest

from Issue #5

1) Batman
2) Terminator
3) Magneto
4) Flash
5) Banshee
6) Kryptonite
7) Nova

Silver Surfer Code:
HANG TEN

SPORTS WORLD

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Directions: 201-599-1717

SHOWS AND CONVENTIONS

CALIFORNIA

FEB 22 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics, Frank & Son Warehouse, 19465 E. Walnut Dr. North. T:100 F:$25 A:free 10am-5pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

FEB 23 CA, GLENDALE, South California's Comic Book & Sports Card & Collectables, Glendale Civic Auditorium, 1401 N.Verdago Rd. T:60 F:$50,2@$90 A:$2.50 10am-4pm, Dean Chen 818-842-1861

FEB 26 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics, Frank & Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr North. T:100 F:$25 A:free 5pm-9:30pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

FEB 29 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics, Frank & Son Warehouse, 19465 E. Walnut Dr. North. T:100 F:$25 A:free 10am-5pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

MAR 4 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics, Frank & Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr North. T:100 F:$25 A:free 5pm-9:30pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

MAR 7 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics, Frank & Son Warehouse, 19465 E. Walnut Dr. North. T:100 F:$35 A:free 10am-5pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

MAR 8 CA, ANAHEIM, Orange County Comic Book Show, Grand Hotel, 7 Freedman Way & Harbor Blvd. T:70 F:$45 A:$3 10am-4pm, Dennis Schumacher 818-768-4678

MAR 11 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics, Frank & Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr North. T:100 F:$25 A:free 5pm-9:30pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

MAR 14 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics, Frank & Son Warehouse, 19465 E. Walnut Dr. North. T:100 F:$35 A:free 10am-5pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

MAR 15 CA, BUENA PARK, Orange County Comic Book & Card & Collectable Show, Sequoia Athletic Club, 7530 Orangethorpe Ave. T:80 F:$65 A:$3 10am-4pm, Pathventure Productions 714-647-7225

MAR 15 CA, VAN NUYS, Valley Card & Comic Convention, L.A. Valley College, 5800 Fulton Ave & Oxnard. T:75 F:$20 A:$2 10am-4pm, Dennis Schumacher 818-768-4678

MAR 18 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics, Frank & Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr North. T:100 F:$25 A:free 5pm-9:30pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

MAR 21 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics, Frank & Son Warehouse, 19465 E. Walnut Dr. North. T:100 F:$35 A:free 10am-5pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

MAR 25 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics, Frank & Son Warehouse, 19465 East Walnut Dr North. T:100 F:$25 A:free 5pm-9:30pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

MAR 28 CA, WALNUT, Baseball Card/Pins/Comics, Frank & Son Warehouse, 19465 E. Walnut Dr. North. T:100 F:$35 A:free 10am-5pm, Frank or Jim 714-594-7492

MAR 29 CA, GLENDALE, South California Comic Book & Sports Card & Collectible Show, Glendale Civic Auditorium, 1401 N. Verdugo Road. T:60 F:$50,2@$90 A:$2.50(under6free), Dean Chen 818-842-1861

CONNECTICUT

MAR 1 CT, WOLCOTT, BSA Troop 230 Comic and Card Show, Tyrell School on Todd Rd (off rt322). F:8'@$30,12'@$45,16'@$55 A:$.99 9:30am-3:30pm, Steve Vastola 203-879-5677

MAR 14 CT, NAUGATUCK, Baseball Card & Comic Book Show, Elks Lodge #967, Rubber Ave. T:48-8ft F:$35,2@$65 A:free 9am-3pm, Thomas E. Bryk 203-723-9289

MAR 15 CT, STAMFORD, Stamford Sportcard & Comic Book Show, Stamford Marriot, 2 Stamford Forum (exit 8 off I-95). T:70 F:6'@$45,8'@$55 A:$2(under10 $.99) 10am-4pm, Donald Ellis 203-746-7531

MAR 22 CT, EAST HARTFORD, Comic Book Convention, Elks Hall. F:$35 A:$.99 11am-5pm, Hal Kinney 203-289-1208

MAR 26-29 CT, WILAMANTIC, Comic Book Convention, Eastbrook Mall, jct rts 6 &195. A:free Mall Hours, Vill Gouvalaris 617-289-8662

ILLINOIS

FEB 23 IL, CHICAGO, Comic Book & Card Show, Ford City Holiday Inn, 7353 S.Cicero. T:50 F:$35 A:$1 10am-4pm, Midwest Shows 708-496-3113

FEB 23 IL, ROSEMONT, For Comic Lovers Only, Horizon Skyline Room, 6925 N. Mannheim Rd. T:45 F:$35 A:$1 10am-4pm, Midwest Shows 708-496-8881

MAR 1 IL, ELGIN, Tri-County Comic Show, Ramada Inn, 500 West River Rd. T:40 F:$35 A:$2 10am-4pm, Jim Everett 708-551-1634

MAR 1 IL, ROSEMONT, America's Largest One Day Comic & Card Show, Horizon - Skyline Room, 6925 N. Mannheim Rd. T:144 F:45 A:$2 10am-4pm, Midwest Shows 708-496-8881

MAR 8 IL, ROSEMONT, Horizon Skyline Room, 6920 N. Mannheim Rd. T:150 F:$45 A:$2 10am-4pm, Midwest Shows 708-496-3113

MAR 14 IL, ROSEMONT, America's Largest One Day Comic & Card Show, Horizon - Skyline Room, 6925 N. Mannheim Rd. T:144 F:45 A:$2 10am-4pm, Midwest Shows 708-496-8881

MAR 21 IL, ROSEMONT, Comic Book Convention, Horizon Skyline Room, 6920 N. Mannheim Rd. T:150 F:$40 A:$2 10am-4pm, Midwest Shows 708-496-3113

MAR 22 IL, HILLSIDE, Hillside Comic Book & Baseball Card Show, Hillside Holiday In, I-290 btwn Wolf & Mannhelm rds. A:$1 10am-3pm, Graham Crackers Comics 708-355-4310

MAR 29 IL, CHICAGO, Comic Book & Card Show, Ford City Holiday Inn, 7353 S.Cicero. T:50 F:$35 A:$1 10am-4pm, Midwest Shows 708-496-3113

APR 5 IL, ROSEMONT, Horizon Skyline Room, 6920 N. Mannheim Rd. T:150 F:$45 A:$2 10am-4pm, Midwest Shows 708-496-3113

APR 12 IL, NAPERVILLE, Naperville All Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza, Warrenville Rd near Naperville Rd & Tollway I-88. A:$1 10am-3pm, Graham Crackers Comics 708-355-4310

APR 12 IL, ROSEMONT, For Comic Lovers Only, Horizon Skyline Room, 6925 N. Mannheim Rd. T:45 F:$35 A:$1 10am-4pm, Midwest Shows 708-496-8881

INDIANA

FEB 28 IN, HIGHLAND, Highland's Monthly Card and Comic Show, Lincoln Center, 2450 Lincoln St. T:20 F:$25 A:$1 6pm-10pm, Marilyn Hall 219-663-8561

MAR 7 IN, SOUTH BEND, Comic Book Convention, Ramada Inn, 52890 US 33 North. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

MAR 8 IN, CROWN POINT, Crown Point's Monthly Card and Comic Show, American Legion Hall, 1410 North Main. T:20 F:$25 A:$1 10am-4pm, Marilyn Hall 219-663-8561

MAR 22 IN, LAFAYETTE, Lafayette Premier Comic Book Show, Howard Johnsons, State Rd 26 East. T:50 F:$35 A:$1.50 10am-4pm, Steve Hinkley 1-317-474-1640

MAR 27 IN, HIGHLAND, Highland's Monthly Card and Comic Show, Lincoln Center, 2450 Lincoln St. T:20 F:$25 A:$1 6pm-10pm, Marilyn Hall 219-663-8561

APR 12 IN, CROWN POINT, Crown Point's Monthly Card and Comic Show, American Legion Hall, 1410 North Main. T:20 F:$25 A:$1 10am-4pm, Marilyn Hall 219-663-8561

IOWA

MAR 7-8 IA, DES MOINES, Baseball Card and Comic Book Show, 4800 Merle Hay Rd. T:20 F:$50,2@$90 A:free 10am-6pm(Mar7)10am-4pm(Mar8), Stacey Craig 515-673-4087

APR 4 IA, DES MOINES, Baseball Card and Comic Book Show, 4800 Merle Hay Rd (Howard Johnsons). T:20 F:$50,2@$90 A:free 10pm-4pm, Stacey Craig 515-673-4087

MARYLAND

FEB 22 MD, SILVER SPRING, Comic Book Convention, Armory Place, 925 Wayne Ave. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

FEB 23 MD, HAGERSTOWN, Reality Comic Book Convention, Venice Inn, 431 Dual Hwy (rt40). F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

MAR 8 MD, SILVER SPRING, Reality Comic Book Convention, Armory Place, 925 Wayne Ave. F:$40 A:$3 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

MAR 22 MD, BALTIMORE, Comic Book Convention, Days Hotel, I-83 exit 17. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises Conventions 301-292-4587

APR 5 MD, BALTIMORE, Reality Comic Book Convention, Sheraton, Elm Rd at BWI Airport. F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Realtiy Conventions 301-791-8159

SHOWS AND CONVENTIONS

APR 12 MD, SILVER SPRING, Reality Comic Book Convention, Armory Place, 925 Wayne Ave. F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Realtiy Conventions 301-791-8159

MASSACHUSETTS

FEB 20-23 MA, DEDHAM, Comic Book Convention, Dedham Mall. A:free Mall Hours, Bill Gouvalaris 617-289-8662

FEB 21-22 MA, SPRINGFIELD, Autograph Baseball Card & Comic Book Show, St. Anthony's Social Hall, 375 Island Pond Rd. T:100-8ft F:$30 A:free(Fri)$2(Sat) 9am-5pm, Sports Superstars 617-738-1238

FEB 23 MA, NEW BEDFORD, Sports Card and Comic Book Show, Days Inn, 500 Hathaway Rd off rt 140. T:50 F:$40,2@$75 A:$1.50 9:30am-3:30pm, Earl Davis 508-675-0400

FEB 27 MA, SEEKONK, Sports Card and Comic Book Show, Johnson & Wales Inn, rts 114A & 44. T:40 F:$40,2@$75 A:$1.50 6pm-10pm, Earl Davis 508-675-0400

FEB 27-MAR 1 MA, FAIRFIELD, Comic Book Convention, Fairfield Mall. A:free Mall Hours, Bill Gouvalaris 617-289-8662

MAR 5 MA, WESTPORT, Sports Card and Comic Book Show, Whites, Rt 6. T:50 F:$40,2@$75 A:$1.50 6pm-10pm, Chris Christopher 506-763-8570

MAR 12 MA, NEW BEDFORD, Sports Card and Comic Book Show, Days Inn, 500 Hathaway Rd off rt 140. T:50 F:$40,2@$75 A:$1.50 6pm-10pm, Earl Davis 508-675-0400

MAR 15 MA, WESTPORT, Sports Card and Comic Book Show, Whites, Rt 6. T:50 F:$40,2@$75 A:$1.50 9:30am-3:30pm, Chris Christopher 506-763-8570

MAR 19 MA, SWANSEA, Sports Card and Comic Book Show, Venus De Milo, 75 Gar Hwy, rt6. T:40 F:$40,2@$75 A:$1.50 6pm-10pm, Earl Davis 508-675-0400

MAR 22 MA, TAUNTON, Sports Card and Comic Book Show, Holiday Inn, 700 Myles Standish Rd. T:50 F:$45,2@$85 A:$1.50 9:30am-3:30pm, Earl Davis 508-675-0400

MAR 26 MA, SEEKONK, Sports Card and Comic Book Show, Johnson & Wales Inn, rts 114A & 44. T:40 F:$40,2@$75 A:$1.50 6pm-10pm, Earl Davis 508-675-0400

MAR 29 MA, NEW BEDFORD, Sports Card and Comic Book Show, Days Inn, 500 Hathaway Rd off rt 140. T:50 F:$40,2@$75 A:$1.50 9:30am-3:30pm, Earl Davis 508-675-0400

APR 2-5 MA, WATERTOWN, Comic Book Convention, Watertown Mall, 550 Arsenal St. A:free Mall Hours, Bill Gouvalaris 617-289-8662

APR 2 MA, WESTPORT, Sports Card and Comic Book Show, Whites, Rt 6. T:50 F:$40,2@$75 A:$1.50 6pm-10pm, Chris Christopher 506-763-8570

APR 5 MA, TAUNTON, Sports Card and Comic Book Show, Holiday Inn, 700 Myles Standish Rd. T:50 F:$45,2@$85 A:$1.50 9:30am-3:30pm, Earl Davis 508-675-0400

APR 11 MA, WESTPORT, Sports Card and Comic Book Show, Whites, Rt 6. T:50 F:$40,2@$75 A:$1.50 9:30am-3:30pm, Chris Christopher 506-763-8570

MICHIGAN

FEB 23 MI, CLAWSON, Comic Book and Baseball Card Show, Knights of Columbus Hall, 870 N Main. T:40 F:$20 A:$1 10am-4pm, Chris Galvan or John Green 313-262-6881 or 313-293-0340

MAR 1 MI, EAST LANSING, Spartan Comic Book Show, Kellogg Center, Michigan State U Campus, Big Ten Room A. F:$35 A:$1.50 10am-4pm, Michael Goldman 313-350-2633

MAR 7-8 MI, SOUTHFIELD, Comics Cafe Comics Con, Southfield Convention Center, Days Hotel, 17017 West 9 Mile. F:$125 A:$5 10am-6pm, Comics Cafe 313-543-2525

MAR 8 MI, LANSING, Comic Book Convention, Sheraton, 925 South Creyts Road Int. 496. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

MAR 8 MI, ROYAL OAK, Encore-Con Comic Book and Baseball Card Show, American Legion Hall, 1815 Rochester Rd. F:$35 A:$1.50 10am-4pm, Michael Goldman 313-350-2633

MAR 28-29 MI, DEARBORN, Motor City Comic Con, Dearborn Civic Center, 15801 Michigan Ave at Greenfield Rd. F:$150 A:$6 11am-7pm(Sat)11am-5pm(Sun), Michael Goldman 313-350-2633

MISSISSIPPI

MAR 27-29 MS, BILOXI, Coast Con XV, Mississippi Gulf Coast Colisuem. A:$25, Coast Con 504-455-0972

MISSOURI

FEB 29-MAR 1 MO, ST. LOUIS, For Comic Lovers Only!, Holiday Inn, Westport 1973 Craigshire I 270 at Page. T:65 F:$125 A:$3 10am-5pm, Midwest Shows 708-496-3113

NEW HAMPSHIRE

MAR 12-15 NH, SALEM, Comic Book Convention, Rockingham Mall, Rt 28. A:free Mall Hours, Bill Gouvalaris 617-289-8662

MAR 19-22 NH, LACONIA, Comic Book Convention, Belknap Mall, exit 20 rt93 & rt3. A:free Mall Hours, Bill Gouvalaris 617-289-8662

NEW JERSEY

MAR 1 NJ, WAYNE, Wayne Nostalgia & Collectibles Show, Co #1 Firehouse, Parish Dr. 9am-3pm, Phil De Mario 201-434-1512days 201-696-6217eves

MAR 8 NJ, BORDENTOWN, Showplace For Collectors, Days Inn, rt206. T:30 F:$35 A:$2 10am-5pm, Ruth Campbell 908-269-9486

MAR 19 NJ, WAYNE, Wayne Nostalgia & Collectibles Show, Co #1 Firehouse, Parish Dr. 5pm-10pm, Phil De Mario 201-434-1512days 201-696-6217eve

MAR 21 NJ, CARTETERET, Comic Book/Baseball All Sports and Non Sports Cards/Toys/Records & Other Collectibles Convention, St. Demetrius Convention Center, 681 Roosevelt Ave. T:60 F:$45 A:$3($2children) 10am-4pm, East Coast Promotions 908-855-5852

MAR 22 NJ, TOMS RIVER, Ocean County Comic Book Convention, Knights of Columbus Post #4969, Tennyson & Whittier Aves. T:30 F:$40 A:$1.50 10am-5pm, Ruth Capbell 908-269-9486

MAR 22 NJ, TOMS RIVER, Baseball Card/Comic Book Show, Quality Inn, rt 37 west. T:30 F:6'@$30,12'@$55,18'@80 A:$1.50(under10free) 9:30am-4:00pm, Bill Mather 908-244-3380

MAR 28 NJ, MONTVALE, Comic Book Convention, Ramada Inn, 100 Chestnut Ridge Rd (GSP ex 172). T:50 F:$45 A:$1.50 9:30-4:30pm, Greg 201-445-728

MAR 29 NJ WOODBRIDGE, Reality Comic Book Convention, Sheraton, 515 Rt.1 south. F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

APR 5 NJ BORDENTOWN, Showplace For Collectors, Days Inn, rt206. T:30 F:$35 A:$2 10am-5pm, Ruth Campbell 908-269-9486

NEW YORK

FEB 21 NY, MIDDLETOWN, Baseball Card and Comic Book Show, Howard Jonson's. T:23 F:$65 A:$1 6pm-10pm, Marc Meyer 914-782-7176

FEB 22, NEW YORK, Baseball Card and Comic Show, 323 East 91 St. A:$1 10am-4pm, Kevin Mullarkey 212-289-6730

FEB 23 NY, FARMINGDALE, Farmingdale Comic Book & Baseball Card & Toy Show, Masonic Temple, 197 Hempstead Tpk (rt 24) between rt 135 & rt 110. A:free 10am-4pm, Ray or Pat 516-669-4332

FEB 23 NY, OZONE PARK, Baseball Cards & Comic Books & Auction, A.Gordon Webster American Legion Hall, 107-10 Rockaway Blvd. T:35-8ft F:$35 A:$1 10am-4pm, Joseph Caruana 718-845-7240

FEB 27 NY, DEPEW, Comics and Cards, Polish Falcons Club, 445 Columbia Ave. T:42 6pm-10pm, Frank Caparaso 716-681-3422

FEB 28 NY, MIDDLETOWN, Baseball Card and Comic Book Show, Howard Jonson's. T:23 F:$65 A:$1 6pm-10pm, Marc Meyer 914-782-7176

MAR 1 NY, SARATOGA SPRINGS, St. Clement's Monthly Baseball Card and Comic Book Show, St. Clemet's School Gym, 231 Lake Ave. T:30 F:$35 A:$1 1pm-6pm, Rocco Rosato 518-584-1429

MAR 6 NY, MIDDLETOWN, Baseball Card and Comic Book Show, Howard Jonson's. T:23 F:$65 A:$1 6pm-10pm, Marc Meyer 914-782-7176

MAR 8 NY, FLUSHING, All-Star Promotions Monthly Comic Book Convention, Flushing Jewish Center, 43-00 171st and Northern Blvd. T:80 F:8ft-$45, 2@$83,3@$115, 6ft-$38,2@$68,3@$95 A:$1 9am-5pm, Matthew T. Deroma 718-463-6540

MAR 8 NY, LONG ISLAND, Long Island Comic Book & Collector's Market Convention, Rockville

SHOWS AND CONVENTIONS

Centre Holiday Inn, 173 Sunrise Hwy. A:free 10am-5pm, Cosmic Comics & Books of Oceanside 516-678-1300

MAR 13 NY, MIDDLETOWN, Baseball Card and Comic Book Show, Howard Jonson's. T:23 F:$65 A:$1 6pm-10pm, Marc Meyer 914-782-7176

MAR 15 NY, BAYSHORE, Comic Book & Baseball Card & Toy Show, Masonic Temple, 2 Union Blvd (btwn 5th ave & rt 231). T:30 A:free, Ray or Pat Weiss 516-669-4332

MAR 20 NY, MIDDLETOWN, Baseball Card and Comic Book Show, Howard Jonson's. T:23 F:$65 A:$1 6pm-10pm, Marc Meyer 914-782-7176

MAR 21 NY, KINGSTON, Comic Book Convention, Ramada Inn, NYS Thruway ex19 & rt28. T:6' A:$3 10am-4pm, MRC Comics 518-283-5306

MAR 21 NY, NEW YORK, Baseball Card & Comic Show, 323 E.91st St. A:$1 10am-4pm, Kevin Mullarkey 212-289-6730

MAR 22 NY, FARMINGDALE, Comic Book & Baseball Card & Toy Show, Masonic Temple, 197 Hempstead Tpk (rt24) btwn rt135 & rt110. A:free 10am-4pm, Ray or Pat 516-669-4332

MAR 22 NY, RIVERDALE, Baseball Card and Comic Book Show, Riverdale YMHA, 5625 Arlington Ave. T:35 F:$55,2@$100 A:$2,members$1 10am-5pm, On the Ball 914-794-2299

MAR 26 NY, DEPEW, Comics and Cards, Polish Falcons Club, 445 Columbia Ave. T:42 6pm-10pm, Frank Caparaso 716-681-3422

MAR 27 NY, MIDDLETOWN, Baseball Card and Comic Book Show, Howard Jonson's. T:23 F:$65 A:$1 6pm-10pm, Marc Meyer 914-782-7176

MAR 29 NY, OZONE PARK, Baseball Cards & Comic Books & Auction, A.Gordon Webster American Legion Hall, 107-10 Rockaway Blvd. T:35-8ft F:$35 A:$1 10am-4pm, Joseph Caruana 718-845-7240

APR 3 NY, MIDDLETOWN, Baseball Card and Comic Book Show, Howard Jonson's. T:23 F:$65 A:$1 6pm-10pm, Marc Meyer 914-782-7176

APR 5 NY, SARATOGA SPRINGS, St. Clement's Monthly Baseball Card and Comic Book Show, St. Clemet's School Gym, 231 Lake Ave. T:30 F:$35 A:$1 1pm-6pm, Rocco Rosato 518-584-1429

APR 10 NY, MIDDLETOWN, Baseball Card and Comic Book Show, Howard Jonson's. T:23 F:$65 A:$1 6pm-10pm, Marc Meyer 914-782-7176

APR 12 NY, LONG ISLAND, Long Island Comic Book & Collector's Market Convention, Rockville Centre Holiday Inn, 173 Sunrise Hwy. A:free 10am-5pm, Cosmic Comics & Books of Oceanside 516-678-1300

NORTH DAKOTA

FEB 22-23 ND, BISMARK, Baseball Card and Comic Book Show V, Doublewood Inn, 1400 E. Interchange. T:25 F:$50 10am-4:30pm, Kevin Bergson 701-235-2562

FEB 29-MAR 1 ND, FARGO, Baseball Card and Comic Book Show, Holiday Inn, 13th Ave S and Interstate 29. T:42 F:$50 10am-4:30am, Kevin J. Bergson 701-235-2562

OHIO

B 23 OH, TOLEDO, Comic Book Convention, 2429 South Reynolds Rd. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

MAR 1 OH, COLUMBUS, Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn, I-70 & Hamilton Rd. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

MAR 14 OH, CINCINNATI, Reality Comic Book Convention, Ramada, I-71 exit 15 at 5901 Pfeiffer Rd. F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

MAR 15 OH, COLUMBUS, Reality Comic Book Convention, Sheraton, 2124 South Hamilton Rd. F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

MAR 22 OH, CLEVELAND, Reality Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn, 4181 W.150th St. F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

MAR 22 OH, MENTOR, Infield Promotions Comic Book & Non-Sport Card show, Travelodge Hotel, 1-271 to I-90 to Exit 306N. T:40 F:$35 A:$1.50 10am-5pm, Irene Pike 1-216-255-8778

MAR 28 OH, CINCINNATI, Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn, US 42 Interstate 75. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises Conventions 301-292-4587

MAR 29 OH, DAYTON, Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn, Interstate 75 exit 44. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises Conventions 301-292-4587

PENNSYLVANIA

MAR 1 PA, HARRISBURG, Reality Comic Book Convention, Host Hotel, I-83 exit 18A. F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

APR 4 PA, MONROEVILLE, Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn, 2750 Mosside Blvd. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises Conventions 301-292-4587

APR 5 PA, ALTOONA, Comic Book Convention, Ramada Hotel, 1 Sheraton Dr. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises Conventions 301-292-4587

APR 12 PA, HARRISBURG, Comic Book Convention, Harrisburg West Host, I-83 exit 18A. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises Conventions 301-292-4587

RHODE ISLAND

APR 5 RI, WARWICK, J.A.S. Promotions Collectors Show, Howard Johnsons Lodge, 20 Jefferson Blvd (exit 15 off 95). T:68 F:$40 A:$1, Jonathan Scungio 410-944-8334

SOUTH DAKOTA

MAR 21-22 SD, SIOUX FALLS, Classic Baseball Card and Comic Book Show, Downtown Holiday Inn, 8th and Phillips Ave. T:50 A:$1 9am-5pm(Sat)10am-4pm(Sun), John Nordstrom 605-338-9519

TENNESSEE

MAR 22 TN, NASHVILLE, Comic Book Convention, Ramada Inn (Opryland), 2401 Music Valley Dr. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises Conventions 301-292-4587

VERMONT

APR 4 VT, BENNINGTON, Comic Book Convention, Ramada Inn, rt 7 & Kocher Dr. T:6'&8' A:$3 10am-4pm, MRC Comics 518-283-5306

VIRGINIA

MAR 14-15 VA, ARLINGTON, Comic Book Convention, Howard Johonson, 2650 Jefferson Davis Hwy. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises 301-292-4587

MAR 22 VA, ROANOKE, The 1st Annual Roanoke Valley Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn Civic Center, Orange Ave and Williamson RD. F:$30 A:$2 10am-4pm, John Slattery 703-366-8634

MAR 29 VA, VIRGINIA BEACH, Comic Book Convention, Pavilion Convention Center, 1000 19th St. A:$4, Jubilee Enterprises Conventions 301-292-4587

APR 4 VA, NORFOLK, Reality Comic Book Convention, Quality Inn, Lake Wright, 6280 Northampton Rd. F:$50 A:$3 10am-4pm, Reality Conventions 301-791-8159

WASHINGTON

APR 12 WA, SEATTLE, Center Con 23, Seattle Center Exhibition Hall. T:125 F:$60 A:$3 10:30am-4:30pm, Carl Waluconis or Bill Wormstedt 206-822-5709 or 206-827-5129

WEST VIRGINIA

MAR 22 WV, WHEELING, Ohio Valley Comic Book Convention, Eagle's Hall, I-70 & ex218. T:30-8' F:$35 A:$2(under6free) 10am-4pm, Jeff Harper 216-493-0408

ATTENTION SHOW PROMOTERS

Having a show? Convention listings in the Wizard Show Calendar are free. Send us:

The name of the show,
Date and hours,
Location and address,
# of tables with prices,
Admission charge,
Contact name and number.

Please send them, six weeks before the month of the show, to:

Wizard Show Calendar
P.O. Box 648
Nanuet, NY 10954-0648

Gareth Shannus, Publisher Doug Goldstein, Asst. Editor

Magic WORDS

c/o Wizard Press P. O. Box 648 Nanuet, NY 10954-0648

Have you ever written to a letters page before? Did you want to but didn't know how? Or just afraid to try? Well, have no fears, Magic Words is here! Write us a letter about anything; we may not have the space to print every letter we get, but no matter who you are, where you live, or how silly your letter is, we're going try to give you a personal response (no, not some stupid "Thanks for writing" message, we mean we're gonna answer your questions personally). So send us your questions and suggestions right now. If you aren't sure what to say, here's some good examples:

Dear Wizards,

I'm one of your "lucky dog" winners. I just received your stunning Spider-Man T-shirt and need I say, it looks great. However, the arrival of this shirt has caused problems between my wife and I.

You see, I have other Spider-man T-shirts printed on black. But even though my wife loves the character Spider-man, she can not wear a black T-shirt due to her pale complexion. This is the source of my problem. My wife wants to wear my new Spider-man T-shirt but I won't let her because it is now my favorite Spidey shirt. Oh well, to each life a little web must fall.

I do have all the copies of Wizard since issue #1 and am pleased with the additions in which it has grown: prices on cards and toys are a real extra plus. If there is one thing I would add, however, it would be to add more info on the prices of comics, such as Disney Comics. Or, would you consider doing a big, once-a-year book? I realize this would take more time and paper but it is the main reason in which to buy "The Guide to Comics." With all sincerity, the Wizard is a great book cover to cover. Even the shop in which I get my comic books, Triple Play in Louisville KY, always points it out and just states "get it."

Well, I've taken enough of your time, and if you start running out of main hero characters for your covers, I would really like to see one of the Falcon and Redwing. Thanks again for your time and the great T-shirt.

Paul & Melissa (the nagging wife)
Smeaton Crestwood, KY

We're glad to hear that you like the shirt, Mike. If not for them darn licensing laws, we'd make more and send you a second one for the little lady. C'est la vie. And you want a big, once a year, special edition of the price guide, you say? Hmm...

Dear Wizard,

I would like to know how comics are graded when they are signed by an artist. Such as Mint to Poor condition. Thanks for listening.

Ilich Cintron Riverside, CA

Normally, writing on a comic book would lower its value, but having an artist or a writer sign it is something special. As long as the signature isn't smeared or the book isn't ripped by the pen (or something catastrophic like that), the condition isn't affected. To many people, a signed book is more of a collectable than an unsigned one, making it more valuable. Of course, having a book that no one cares about signed by an artist that no one has heard of doesn't make it special, but getting a hot book signed usually makes it hotter.

Dear Wizard,

I want to know who is the strongest Marvel team and who is the second strongest, and if they had a fight who would win. I really like the Wizard. Keep up the good work. You should all get raises.

Mario Dahdah San Fransisco, CA

Well Mario, the most powerful Marvel team would undoubtedly be the combined East coast/West coast Avengers. With such incredible powerhouses like Thor, Iron Man, She-Hulk, Wonder Man, Captain America and the Vision, the Avengers can't be defeated in straightforward combat. The second strongest Marvel team would have to be the combined Gold and Blue strike teams of the X-Men. Featuring such warriors as Wolverine, Colossus, Bishop, Archangel and Cyclops, the X-Men are a powerful group but probably could be defeated by the Avengers.

Dear Wizard,

First of all, your price guide is a great idea but your prices seem too inconsistent and your trading card section is too brief (what about McFarlane and Jim Lee cards among others). But other than that and your complete balls-up of the crossover collection you are doing a marvelous job. By the way, your competitions are great, they provide us with a chance to win things that we would not normally be able to get our hands on. When are the results going to be listed? Well, I have to go now but once again I will state that your magazine has gone down a real treat in New Zealand and I hope you guys will be around for your 300th anniversary issue...

Vincent Warnock
Wellington, New Zealand

New Zealand? Golly, how's the weather all the way across the planet? Thanks for the compliments, Vince. The trading card section will be improved and expanded, and every month you can see the list of winners of previous contests on the contest page itself.

Dear Wizard,

I would like to ask some questions. 1) How long is the Cable mini series going to be? 2) At the end of Infinity Gauntlet number 6, what happened to Thanos and what will become of him?

Joey Pantone
Ridgewood, NY

Marvel's Cable mini series will be four issues long, written and drawn by Rob Liefeld. At the end of the Infinity Gauntlet, Thanos had given up on the whole conquer-the-universe thing and became a farmer. He will return in the upcoming Infinity War series this summer, which will be Marvel's big crossover epic of 1992.

Dear Wizard,

My name is Tom Luggiero. I am 15 years old and comics are my life. I like Spider-Man and the Punisher. I have four questions:

1. Why is Spider-Man so good to criminals? You don't see the Punisher or Wolverine talk to their victims. I'm starting to get the impression that Spider-Man is a wimp.
2. Is the Punisher ever going to settle down and start a family again?
3. Does Spider-Man still have his cosmic powers and if so, why doesn't he use them in battles?
4. Are you going to put the Punisher on your front cover and if so, which number?

I hope you publish this letter as soon as possible. By the way did I mention that the Wizard guide is totally AWESOME. Well gotta go. Bye.

Tom Luggiero
Hackensack, NJ

1. A bit of a violence fan, aren't we, Tom? Just because Spidey doesn't kill the people he's chasing doesn't mean he's a wimp - it means he's actually following the law and putting people in jail. People like the Punisher and Wolverine don't believe in the legal system and so they do things a little drastically. 2. Probably not, Frank Castle isn't exactly looking to settle down, if you know what I mean. 3. The Captain Universe powers that Spidey had didn't last too long, and left him in Amazing Spider-Man #329. 4. There is a Punisher cover in the works by John Romita, Jr. It will be used in the upcoming months but exactly when is a secret (heh heh).

Dear Wizard,

Is Darkhawk going to die when Tombstone tore the amulet off of him? I'm just a beginner in collecting comics but I went to the comic show and bought more than $40 of comics a day. Is California having any more comic shows? Where? I've one more question. How come Darkhawk comics are worth more than Foolkiller comics when Foolkiller came out before Darkhawk?

Michael Low
San Fransisco, CA

By this time, you've probably read how Darkhawk beat Tombstone in the comics. He's a popular character, and that makes his books worth more. Remember, Mike - it's not the age of a book that really matters, but it's the popularity that makes it valuable. And of course California's having more shows. Just turn back 2-3 pages and take a peek at the show calendar.

Dear Wizard,

Now I'm not normally one to be picky, but there is something in Wizard #4 that needs to be pointed out. On page 111, underneath your picture of Doom Patrol #40, there is a very interesting little question. It says:

"Does ANYONE read the copyrights?"

As a matter of fact, yes I do read copyrights, because it is one of the most fascinating parts of the magazine. Why, you should have a whole section devoted to copyrights...yeah! Imagine, Wizard: The Guide to Copyrights. Now that has a catchy ring to it. Just sort of stands out there, doesn't it? A truly classic title.

Christopher A. Adams
Kingston, OH

You feeling okay, Chris?

Dear Wizard,

I have a few questions that have been on my mind lately. I hope you'll be able to answer them. 1) Does ordinary light from lightbulbs affect the paper and cover of a comic? 2) What does an editor do in a comic book? 3) Is there more to being a letterer in a comic book or is it just that? 4) How do you become a letterer?

Michael Smith
Québec, Canada

Mike, a normal ceiling lightbulb wouldn't really hurt your comics but you should still keep them bagged and backboarded, in boxes to make sure that they don't wear. Editors keep checks on the story's continuity with a character's history, and go over the stories to make sure that they make sense. For instance, if a writer told a story where Batman flies, the editor would say, "no no, remove that." As for letterers, what they do is write in all the words in a comic book - they can make things seem dramatic by accenting the words, or make things seem quiet by making the words really small. To be one, you've got to have very, very nice handwriting.

Dear Wizard,

A few weeks ago when Marvel raised the prices (again), I noticed that the paper was of slightly higher grade. Sorry Marvel, but that doesn't quite cut it. Anyway, I asked the manager of my local store to cut the so-called "hot" titles out of my saver. I kept buying Daredevil because he was my favorite Marvel character, and the Bullseye story pointed towards greater heights. Then I picked up ish #301, pee-yoo! This "Owl" looked cornier than "Captain Ultra." Scratch DD. The only Marvel title I'm still buying is Excalibur, mainly because I vowed to buy all of Alan Davis's work since Miracleman Books one and two.

How can Marvel pull in so much profit, and not be able to build a budget large enough to turn out a decent screen version of their characters? Or is it that DC's movies and shows look so much better because of Warner's financial strength and know how?

T. C. Costulius
Suisun, CA

If you were as disappointed as we all were by the Captain America and Punisher movies, just wait for Spider-Man and the X-Men. They should be a whole lot better. And speaking of DC's movies, rumor has it (though just a rumor) that Warner is

considering a Superman V, featuring a story built upon John Byrne's work on the character. Cool, yes?

Dear Wizard,

I know this letter won't be printed, since I'm writing about a non-mutant superhero. Still, my questions need to be answered.

1. Why no articles on Iron Man? If you say he is too unrealistic, take a look at the X-Men. Weather control, steel flesh, optic blasts. These are qualities not many people have.

2. Does Bob Layton have any plans to leave X-O and go back to Iron Man? I miss his talent greatly.

3. Why not let Bob Layton do Iron Man on the cover of Wizard?

4. I would like to write Bob Layton and thank him for his many past issues of Iron Man. Is there a Bob Layton Fan Club or a mailing address you could give me? Finally, one last thought:

5. I dare you to print my letter!!!!!! The challenge is made. I'm waiting.

Mark Dail
Ormond Beach, FL

Now look here, Mark. It just so happens that Iron Man is my personal favorite character in the whole wide world of comicdom, so don't get uppity. There is an Iron Man cover in the planning stages, but I can't say by who or when it'll come out (I think Gareb's holding out just to make me crazy). I promise you that when it does you'll read the coolest, most awesome article on the history of the Golden Avenger that you've ever read. Unfortunately for Iron Man and all of us Iron Man fans, Bob Layton left Marvel recently and settled down at Valiant (where he's still doing awesome work). It doesn't look like he's going back soon. If you want to send him a letter, you can write him c/o Voyager Communications, 275 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10001. Tell him Wizard sent you.

Fabulous
Letter Art

Thanks for the terrific letter art. Every month our diehard fans with talent to burn adorn their praise (or complaints), sometimes, we think, just to get a little extra attention. Guess what. It works. Here's four for this month!

From Calvin Armstrong New York, New York

From Nathan Cheever Germantown, Maryland

From Jacob Aguirre Redlands, California

From Rustolium Somerville, Alabama

Listen Up

Over the past few months we've gotten lots and lots of letters saying "Hey, I want a Venom cover and I want it now." So, because we love you guys so much, we've set up the most awesome Venom cover you've ever seen for the next issue. Sneak peak? Sorry. You're gonna have to wait untill it comes out to see it, and you won't be disappointed.

The Uncanny X-Men™ Trading Cards. Enter A Whole New Dimension Of Action And Adventure.

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THE UNCANNY X-MEN

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